

THE HURRY CALL
OF JESUS



THOMAS·JEFFERSON·VILLERS

J. Howard McBain

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By
THOMAS JEFFERSON VILLERS
D. D., LL. D.

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To
EVELYN PRICHARD VILLERS

Sympathetic Sharer
in
My Work of Faith
and
Labor of Love
and
Patience of Hope

FOREWORD

FOR many years I have held that every preacher ought to be a clear expositor of the truth, an impassioned advocate of the truth, and a daily incarnation of the truth. By the truth I mean what Jesus meant when he said, "Thy word is truth."

No one so well as I knows how far short of my ideal I have fallen. This has made me shrink from offering sermons for print, though requests not a few have long been made.

I need not add that the constant pressure of pastoral duties has made it difficult to do any worthy literary work.

It is hoped that these sermons, such as they are, may stimulate Christians to do the work of evangelists, and may win some who do not know my Lord to love and trust and obey him.

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I ·

THE HURRY CALL OF JESUS

*We must work the works of him that
sent me, while it is day; the night
cometh, when no man can work.*

—John 9: 4.

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It was a Sabbath Day, long ago; an autumn day, when all nature was tinged with sober gold. It was the last autumn of our Lord's earthly life. The hour, it would seem, was late afternoon. The low descending sun was nearing the treetops in the west, and would soon drop like a great ball of fire into the Mediterranean. At the Temple gate, perhaps by the roadside, sat a blind beggar, whose eyes from his birth had rolled in irksome night. He was not allowed to ask alms on the Sabbath; otherwise, with his hand outstretched, he would have been crying: "Gain merit by me! Gain merit by me!" But his very affliction was a plea for help. And Jesus, whose attention human need never escaped, "saw" him—regarded him with a meaningful look; stopped before him; and the disciples in their mental confusion asked, "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind?" They were inclined to speculate rather than to compassionate. Jesus was concerned

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more about the cure of blindness than about the origin. To him a misfortune was always a call to minister. There was a deeper philosophy of suffering than his disciples imagined, namely, that through its relief or removal God might be manifested. And so with the thought of the stones which the mob had just taken up to cast at him, and with a glance at the setting sun, a reminder of his rapidly closing life, he said: "We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work." In this sentence, one of the most solemn that ever fell from his lips, our Lord sets before us five things.

First, *a mutual obligation*. "We must work." He was conscious of an inward compulsion. Necessity, he felt, was laid upon him. A feeling of "must" was always tugging at his heart, and moving him to action. In this case he was possessed by a threefold desire: To illustrate God's beneficence; to remove man's blindness; and to express his own compassion. His dynamic came from above, from around, and from within.

Much of our work, as Doctor Jowett sug-

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gested, we approach from a wrong angle. Our impulse to deal with affliction and want is not born from above. We do not set ourselves to relieve them with the sense of a heavenly vocation. We become so accustomed to them as to grow callous to them; so familiar with them as to miss their spiritual significance. We see only a human misfortune where we ought to see an opportunity for the display of God's power. When we approach suffering and sorrow and sin as Jesus did, these commonplaces become tragic opportunities through which divine goodness may get itself revealed, human need obtain relief, and our own benevolent impulse find expression. Our Lord began the work of flooding sightless eyes with light, the work of lifting the veil from blinded hearts. To that same ministry he now obligates us.

In doing this, he takes us into partnership with himself. How he exalts us when he says, "We must work!" The consciousness that we are laborers together with him will transfigure even the monotonous round of our daily toil. Working with him, the common task can never appear entirely com-

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monplace. No labor that we share with him can ever seem insignificant, and none so unimportant that it may be negligently done. It will be aquiver with a mysterious meaning. It will be touched with a mystical light. The glow of privilege will always be on the path of duty. Zeal will replace languor; and the passion to serve will dominate our life. Conscious that we are really fellow helpers of him, we shall feel as did George Macdonald's vicar, after hearing a lad wish that he could help God paint the glowing west. If we can put only one touch of a rosy sunset into the life of any man or woman, if we can help the growth of a single thought that struggles toward the light, if with gentle hand we can do no more than brush the earth-stain from one snow-drop, we shall feel that we have worked with God.

The second truth which these words of Jesus emphasize is *a divine mission*. "The works of him that sent me." He was always conscious of having been sent by the Father—an assurance that gave unity to his manifold activities. What the works were that he was sent to perform he has clearly

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told us. In the synagogue at Nazareth, he declared that he was sent on a sixfold mission: To evangelize the poor; to heal the broken-hearted; to emancipate the captive; to restore the blind; to liberate the bruised; and to proclaim the Lord's acceptable year. He was sent to bear the good news of enrichment to those whose purse and whose spirit were impoverished. He was sent to comfort those whose hearts were crushed under the sorrowful weight of an unintelligible world. He was sent to swing open imprisoning doors to those who had felt the binding, the blinding, and the grinding power of sin. He was sent to give a vision of life and of God to those who had eyes but who saw not. He was sent to pour the oil of gladness into the bruises of men's souls, and to let the healing of his seamless dress trail where the sick might always touch it. He was sent to herald Jehovah's acceptable year, his own gracious reign, prefigured by the year of Jubilee, when slaves were freed, debts remitted, and lost estates regained.

Here we see him at the "work" of opening blind eyes. How skilful his approach!

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How effective his treatment! "I went," the man said, "I washed, I see." He saw Christ first as simply a man. But it is the best day in any of our lives when we come into living contact with the *man* that is called Jesus. Then he saw Christ as a prophet, a revealing, authoritative teacher. Then he saw him as the Messiah, the sent one. Then he confessed him as the Son of God. What an evolution of faith! What a wondrous change within a single day! In the morning, an intruder on the temple steps; at the evening hour a worshiper of the temple's Lord!

"Doctor Maclaren," a humble member of the great preacher's church once asked him, "are you aware that your housemaid is under serious conviction regarding the state of her soul?" "No," he replied, "I did not know, but I commend her to *your* care. I am able, with God's help, to teach his truth to hundreds; you can bring it home better to one or two." Just here many of us fail. We find it easier to deliver our message to hundreds than to one or two. Our difficulty of pressing home the question of personal religion increases inversely with

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the size of our audience. Not so with the Master. After saying, "We must work the works of him that sent me," he began with one man.

As the Father sent him, commissioned him, equipped him, even so does he send, commission, equip us—to bear the same message, to do the same service, and to live the same life; to continue and complete the same ministry of evangelizing, healing, emancipating, enlightening, and consoling; to hasten the same divine event that he sought, the world's jubilee, when all who are enslaved by creed or greed, by poverty or passion, shall be set free; when men everywhere shall forgive their debtors as they expect God to forgive their debts; when the lost estates of purity and unselfishness shall be restored to manhood and womanhood; and when the whole world, which is now one neighborhood, shall be converted into one brotherhood.

Among our American Indians, a most impressive custom long prevailed. On reaching the age of seventeen or eighteen their young men, after carefully bathing themselves, would go alone to the highest hill,

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there to wait for a night and a day upon the Great Spirit, seeking thereby to discover his will concerning their career. They were very reticent regarding the secrets that were whispered to them on the heights; but the eye of many an old chief on his death-bed has glowed with a strange light as he disclosed the commission which on some lonely hilltop was given him when life was young. If you are not sensible of a clear and definite mission, go alone to your high solitude, and let the Great Spirit speak; in the quiet of the prayer-closet talk with Christ behind the shut door; and then with the secret of the Lord in your soul, without haste yet without rest set yourself to working the works of God.

A limited opportunity—that is a third thought which Jesus includes in this swift, burning sentence, "While it is day." The shortness of our day is a truth which we all know, and all forget. From time immemorial poets and prophets alike have vainly sought to impress us with our transiency. They have urged almost every conceivable figure—a withering grass-blade, a moving shadow, a vanishing vapor. Jesus

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profoundly felt this. To him life was but a short time-link that bound together two eternities, one out of which he had just come, and the other into which he was soon going. To him, therefore, every day was trembling with destinies; every hour was pulsating with vast issues. Therefore he seized every passing moment and filled it full of loving service. As he passed by, he saw this blind man, and wrought the works of God. As he passed by, he called Matthew and lodged in his soul the germ-joy of a new gospel.

The period of life is brief,
'Tis the red in a red rose-leaf,
'Tis the gold of a sun-set sky,
'Tis the flight of a bird on high.
But we may fill the space
With such infinite grace
That the red shall tinge all time,
And the gold through the ages shine,
And the bird fly swift and straight
To the portals of God's own gate.

At Ellis Island, when Mr. Watchorn was commissioner of immigration, there landed one day a Swede, whose funds were insufficient to admit him here. Asked if he could

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name any one who might be induced to aid him, he mentioned a fellow countryman who had greatly prospered since coming to New York. That man was summoned and questioned. He sat down beside the hapless stranger, and the two became so absorbed in each other as to forget their surroundings entirely. As they went on talking about their homes in the old country, it appeared that when the one now an American citizen was a boy in Sweden, he had often been favored by the father of the immigrant, now in sore need. "Well," interrupted the Commissioner at last, as he broke into the conversation, "what are you going to do with him?" "Do with him?" exclaimed the prosperous friend; "everything that love can do!" It was the very spirit of the Master, who felt his heart respond as quickly as need was seen; and everything that love could do he did. There was no time to wait.

Nor may we defer any kindness or helpful ministry. While it is day, we must speak a word in season to them that are weary. While it is day, we must feed the hearts that are cavernous for sympathy,

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whether among those on our own social level, or down among the submerged strata—the butt-ends of society, the pitiful wrecks of humanity, beneath the débris of whose broken lives there lies “a buried magnificence” still capable of a resurrection. While it is day, we must call back to God those who are haunted by thoughts of higher and happier and holier things, like a lost child dreaming of home and his mother’s arms and smiles and cradle-songs. The love whose immediacy impelled Jesus, and ought to constrain us, never hesitates, never discriminates, and it never fails. This then be the spur that urges us on: “Everything that love can do, while it is day.”

“The night cometh.” That—*the approaching night*—is the fourth thought which this freighted sentence bears. In a Syrian night, there is something peculiarly weird and impressive. Down in the Jordan valley late one afternoon, I saw the full-orbed moon rising over the mountain of Moab, just as the sun was sinking behind Mount Olivet. The western cloud-rack was drenched and saturated with fiery brightness; and when the sun’s top-rim was no longer visible

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the red glow above it was shot through and through with shafts of garnet. In the east, higher and higher floated the moon, adorned with a silvery vapor like a long bridal veil. Myriads of stars kindled and burned, as if they might be watch-fires of the angels. The radiant solemnity, as a softened light fell on land and sea, stirred many an impulse to prayer. The silence was broken by an occasional sigh of the wind, the piping of a black mole-cricket, the bark of a far-away dog, or the startling cry of a jackal whose prolonged call rose and broke in a shrill quaver. It was night—such a night as Jesus had often seen, and whose coming now reminded him that the twelve hours of his life-day were nearly numbered.

Dr. Samuel Johnson had inscribed on his watch these very two Greek words that the Son of man here uses—"Cometh night"; so that whenever he inquired the time of his working day, he might be warned of its brevity. At the age of twenty-six Walter Scott engraved them on the sun-dial of his cottage home—"Cometh night." Thomas Carlyle wrote them in his first book—"Cometh night." And Robert Murray Mc-

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Cheyne, who spurs us yet with his remembered name, sealed his letters with this seal—"Cometh night."

Our real life is reckoned "in deeds, not in years; in thoughts, not in breaths; in feelings, not in figures on a dial." Its value is measured by quality, not by length. Its pathos is misuse, not suffering. Its triumph is achievement, not prolongation. It is a failure not when our dreams are unfulfilled, but when our work is undone.

The final thought which Jesus here suggests is *the finished task*. "When no man can work." Nightfall *ends* many a toiler's work before it is *finished*. It was so with Catherine the Great, Empress of Russia. When the darkness fell on her projects, she wailed, "I am an accumulation of broken ends"! They carried Raphael into his studio, and as he took a last look at "The Transfiguration," the canvas on which he had made visible to mortal eyes a part of the divine essence, he cried, "Alas, it will never be completed!" Cecil Rhodes, whose strenuous life began with digging diamonds out of the Kimberly mines for himself and closed with trying to carve an empire out of

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Africa for his Queen, died with these words on his lips, "So much to do, so little done." Jesus, when the night came, said, "Father, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

After reading the story of Edward Henry Harriman's last hours, the picture of his unfinished house was long before me. It seemed one of the ironies of fate, one of the tragedies of history. There it stood in its castled magnificence, the crowning glory of that vast estate of 35,000 acres. For twenty years it had been his dream. There he was planning to rest in his old age. But death caught his hand midway his gigantic enterprises, and the palace was unfinished. Amid the deepening shades of mortal dissolution, workmen were completing the last wing when the end came. The sound of hammers, we were told, was a fitting music to toll out the life of one whose chief claim to men's regard was that he had been a builder.

The broad halls of Arden castle, by reason of its incompleteness, had rung with no peals of laughter at great social functions. Around the massive table of the spacious

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dining-room no friends had eaten in merri-ment and intimate fellowship. In the long rows of guest-chambers no welcomed guests had slept and dreamed dreams of the rail-way king's prosperity. Physicians had been there to help him in his last fight with the grim monarch of the shadows. There, too, in that atmosphere of death and money, a few rulers in the world of finance had been, to receive his final behest as he felt the scepter of gold and power slipping from his grasp.

And so that unfinished house stood atop the Ramapo mountains as the symbol to me of human frailty and unfulfilled ambition; a monument to the uncertainty of life and the certainty of death; a mute message pointing to the unsatisfying nature of things earthly, and by its very silence urging men to be rich toward God by being rich in good works and in the things of the heart and spirit.

Listen once more to the words of Jesus: "We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work." If we merge our life in his, and unite with him in working

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the works of God, he will help us finish our appointed task. Our life will not be an accumulation of broken ends. It will have proportion and completeness. Our labor of love will be crowned with the beauty of the Lord, and the work of our hands he will establish.

O that each in the day
Of his coming may say,
I have fought my way through;
I have finished the work
Thou didst give me to do.

II

THE CHRISTIAN'S MISSION

*As thou hast sent me into the world, even
so have I also sent them into the world.*

—John 17: 18.

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WHEN the high priest entered the Holy of Holies, the people, with every eye strained toward his white-robed figure, watched him as he disappeared within the sacred enclosure. As he folded back the curtain of the Most Holy Place, and there in that awful solitude, lighted only by the red glow of the coals on his censer, poured out his soul in prayer for the people, they reverently withdrew a few steps from the sanctuary and worshiped in silence. As we here, in this seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel, behold our Great High Priest kneeling in the Holiest of All, and listen to his breathing into the ear of God, praying the Father to glorify his name, to sanctify his people, and to unify his church, that through such unity the world may believe, we, like ancient Israel, may well feel the sacredness and solemnity of the hour and bow our heads in reverent and worshipful silence.

The farewell discourses were ended. Gethsemane with its sorrow, its homesickness,

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its amazement, its tearful supplication, its bloody sweat, was but a step in the distance. The shadows flung from the cross were deepening and darkening. Jesus knew that before another sunset love's redeeming work would be done—the one sacrifice for sins would be offered forever. In these last moments he betook himself to prayer. With eyes uplifted toward the Father, the divine Suppliant first reviewed his own ministry. "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Then his mind turned toward his disciples; he prayed for them, declaring their mission to be a continuation of his own. This thought he emphasized before his death—on the earthward side of Calvary. "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." The same thought emerged with him from the tomb and fell from his lips on the heavenward side of the cross. Then said Jesus to them again, "Peace be with you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." Thus with the emphasis of repetition our Lord announces the Christian's mission to the world.

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Jesus is called the apostle of our confession. He is God's sent one whom we confess. This fact he repeatedly emphasized, affirming himself to be the one whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world. In John's Gospel alone he speaks of himself thirty-six times as being sent of God. He was sent to preach good tidings to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. Having now fulfilled that mission, *he formed a new apostolate*. Notice the prayer, "thou" and "me" linked by "sent"; "I" and "them" coupled by the same link; the word translated "sent" implying a commission for a definite purpose. When behind those shut doors that first Easter he said, "Even so send I you," he used a different word, accentuating not so much the work of the apostolate as the authority of the sender. Thomas was not present that night, and Luke tells us that others than the ten were there. So that the commission was not limited to Peter and his fellow apostles, but is rather the charter of the whole church.

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And it was so understood in those primitive days. Every disciple counted himself a discipler, every Christian an evangelist, every believer a missionary. No one ever dreamed, so far as we know, that responsibility was lifted from the individual and laid upon the church as a corporate agency. The conviction was clear that the church could get into saving contact with men only as the individual member came into personal touch with them. Jesus went after Nicodemus, Andrew after Simon, Philip after Nathanael. A man's conversion was accounted a sufficient "call" to tell the good news. And so we learn that when persecution scattered the church at Jerusalem, the rank and file of the membership went everywhere, preaching the word. And up yonder at Antioch where the first Gentile church was gathered, and the first foreign mission society was organized, the work was begun by humble men upon whom ordaining hands had never been laid—men whose only authority to preach was a consuming passion to make their Lord known.

When, in the name of the Great Commission, did God relegate to clergymen the total

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output of saved souls? The Founder of the church was a layman. Its first apostles were laymen. The ages of the martyrs, when the gospel ran abroad with winged feet, were the ages when laymen were specially active. This grand and awful time in which we dwell is the laymen's era and opportunity. Let business thoroughness be saturated with religious principles. Let the democracy get into action, as indeed it is beginning to do. There are few more hopeful signs in our day than the increasing interest and activity of Christian men. With the conviction that the redemption of humanity is a task so difficult and colossal as to demand the biggest brain and the most courageous heart, men with capacity to originate and manage vast enterprises are becoming promoters of the kingdom, and are coming to see that the establishment of God's reign here and now is the chief business of life. You laymen can reach fellow men with whom we pastors can find no point of contact. Unacquainted with the church, they cannot dissociate us from our calling. Many of them, down deep in their hearts, have a feeling that we should not talk religion so

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fluently if we had to share their toil and front their temptation. Whereas if you tell them that you have found Christianity a good thing for this life, if you invite them to your pews with such warmth and earnestness as to give assurance that you do not want their money but themselves, they cannot shunt you off so easily. Upon you, in this renaissance of the masculine emphasis, is largely laid the responsibility of removing the reproach so frequently flung at the church, namely, that it is a woman's organization—like that church of which I heard its aged pastor say, that the constituent members consisted of four sisters and a few other brethren.

Jesus was the son of God's love. He was the representative and depositary of that love. He was God's love made manifest. Love led him to his incarnation. Only love will explain his ministry. Did he feed the hungry? Did he hear the speechless pleading of a widow's tears? Did he bear our sins in his own body on the tree? It was love that hallowed the whole of his life from his unhonored birthplace to his borrowed grave; from the night when angels at Beth-

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lehem sang his cradle-hymn to the darksome hour when the multitude heard the wail of Calvary's broken heart. "He loved me," Paul exclaimed, "and gave himself for me."

A commercial traveler stood in my study and gave me a chapter of his history. Ten years before he had fallen so low through sin that he was utterly forsaken, cast off even by his own wife. One night he wandered into the Pacific Garden Mission, Chicago, where he heard something about a Saviour. He went back every night for a week and listened. Chords that were broken began to vibrate once more. After the service that seventh night, he groped his way through the darkness to an old board fence near the house where his wife lived, and there behind that fence threw himself down, hoping that when morning dawned he might peep through the cracks, and see at the window yonder his little girl whom he was no longer permitted to visit. As the eastern sky began to flush with promise of the dawn, Palmer, weary and hungry and lonely and heartsick, crept up to the feet of Jesus. "And greatly to my surprise," he said, "Christ didn't scold me. He knew I'd been

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scolded enough already. And he didn't give me any advice either. I'd long ago had plenty of that. No," he added with a trembling voice, "Jesus just loved me." And when the sun got above the horizon that morning, a brighter light was filling all the chambers of his heart. He got back a good business position, and with it his former home; and everywhere he went, he kept telling what a dear Saviour he had found. Are you away from God, your soul in darkness, homesick and sinsick? Creep up to the pierced feet. He will not scold you. He will not advise you. He will just love you—love you

Out of your shameful failure and loss,
Into the glorious gain of his cross;
Out of earth's sorrow into his balm;
Out of life's storms and into his calm;
Out of distress to jubilant psalm.

Children of God, apostles of Jesus, as love was the master passion of him whom the Father sent, so must love be the constraining motive of us whom the Son sends. Humanity is always responsive to the touch of love. Around on the sunny side of the most frigid man there is a door that opens

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to the pressure of a loving heart. "Thou hast loved my soul from the pit!" exclaimed Hezekiah, as he looked back at his alarming illness; as if God, bending over, had used his heart as a magnet to lift his prostrate servant from the grave. Love magnetized Hezekiah from death. Be ye, therefore, imitators of God and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you. As his sent ones, we are to go about loving people out of sin into holiness, out of unrest into peace. Constrained by love, impelled by love, by love urged on, by love held irresistibly to one aim, we are sent to those yet in enmity against God, to love them into fellowship with him.

So much for the new apostolate, with its membership and motive. Now see *a divine ministry continued*.

It is profitable to note Christ's interpretation of his own mission, and to read our mission in the light of that interpretation. Hear his words: "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. The Son of man came to seek and to save

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that which was lost. The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you."

He came to minister; and he ministered to all classes. He welcomed influential Nicodemus, and explained to him the new birth. He took equal pains with the despised woman of Samaria, and drew for her the living water. The two accounts are placed side by side. During his life he mingled with the poor; in his death he made his grave with the rich—in order that he might save both.

This is an age when men are calling for "a God whose face is humanized to lineaments of love." They want to see Christ in us. He fed the crowd, then talked to them about the bread of life. A Christian's tongue ought never to be larger than his hand. It is unnatural. Profession without practise is as dead as faith without works. The Christian is not a saint preserved for future happiness, but a sinner redeemed for present service. The story of God's life in Christ and in his people—that is the history

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of Christianity. Its distinguishing grace is not "other-worldliness," but the anointing which sends us about doing good. Christianity is not primarily a thing of the stars, but of the streets. No longer can we content ourselves with singing about our title clear to mansions in the skies, and neglect the vitiated tenement that is breeding a lawless and criminal citizenry. There is less religion in working ourselves into a rapt and shining mood about the rest that remains for the people of God, than in laboring to improve an industrial condition which throws men and women on the scrap-heap and slag-dump.

Jesus brought himself into contact with humanity at the point of need. With hands full of helpful charity, with a word in season to them that are weary, with a heart at leisure from itself to soothe and sympathize, we are sent to continue his work. We ought to compel the gratitude of men by putting ourselves under their burden. We ought to speak so as to be heard in matters of public policy and reformatory legislation. This is our province as apostles of the Man of Galilee. For at bottom,

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social and industrial problems are moral and religious questions. The sores of society can be healed only by the touch of the pierced Hand. That Hand the church holds.

With the purpose of our mission clearly defined, Jesus declares that our parish is the world. His command to make disciples of all the nations has never been repealed. In the *Inferno*, Dante tells us, some of the shades he saw were so lean and unsubstantial that they could not so much as cast a shadow. He need not have gone to Hades to find them. Many of them are still walking around on the earth's crust. A few of them still hold membership in our churches. They are cabined, cribbed, confined in local interests. They feel no obligation to the man whose color or facial angle is different from their own. They have never breasted the sea and looked toward heathendom, where restless millions wait the light whose dawning makes things new. They have never been fired with a passion to enthrone Christ in the hearts of all men.

In every church I wish there hung a chart constructed on the basis of Acts 1:8.

THE CHRISTIAN'S MISSION

"Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Four concentric circles. A picture of the local church at the center. The inner circle labeled at the top "In Jerusalem"; at the bottom, "City Missions." The second circle at the top, "In all Judea"; at the bottom, "State Missions." The third circle at the top, "In Samaria"; at the bottom, "Home Missions." The outer circle at the top, "Unto the uttermost part of the earth"; at the bottom, "Foreign Missions." Across them all in the shape of a cross, "Preach the gospel to every creature"; "The field is the world."

Ours is the world-vision. We must cultivate a race-consciousness. We ought to push our horizon out to the farthest man. To Christ's eye the need of the world was visible. To his ear the cry of the world was audible. Against his heart pressed the burden of the world's guilt. His love overleaped all boundaries. His mind was not measured by parallels of latitude, or his sympathy by degrees of longitude. With him "There was neither east nor west,

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border, nor breed, nor birth." Our island possessions and international relationships are not military accidents. God has flung our geography out into the seas, that he may compel us to take our place in the family of nations.

Broken in health, Cecil Rhodes set sail for Southern Natal. With the clear vision of an empire-builder, he soon saw that the scattered states of South Africa might be federated under one government, and the influence of that government pushed northward through the heart of the Dark Continent. He began to covet that vast territory for England. One day, drawing his hand across the map of Africa, he said: "That is my dream; that all red." At once he set himself to the colossal task. For thirty years he dreamed of presenting an empire to his Queen; for thirty years he toiled to bring a new dominion under her sway. With a holier ambition than that which moved and mastered him, we ought to draw our hand across the map of the world—our congested, conglomerate cities, big with weal or woe; the wonder land of our great west, where the plastic elements of another

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vast empire are rounding into form; the Christless nations beyond, sodden in immorality and practising abominations under the very shadow of mosque and temple; and we ought to say, "All that for Christ," and then set ourselves unitedly and worthily to the stupendous conquest.

In view of our mighty world-mission, are we in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling? There is comfort in our Lord's intercessory prayer. For we have here not only a new apostolate formed, and a divine ministry continued, but also *a complete equipment guaranteed*. When Jesus speaks of sending us into the world, his word means more than a mere sending. It implies an official, authoritative commission together with the necessary equipment. As the Father equipped him for his ministry, so he thoroughly furnishes us unto every good work.

His message was given him. He said: "As my Father hath taught me, I speak. The words that I speak, I speak not of myself. I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him. The Father who sent me gave me a commandment what

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I should say." As the Father sent him, even so has he sent us. As he has taught us, we speak. The words that we speak, we speak not of ourselves. We speak to the world those things which we have heard of him. The Son who sent us gave us a commandment what we should say. Our theme thereby is defined and limited. It is primarily the things concerning the kingdom.

When Paton was printing his first book in the Aniwan language, a book composed mostly of Scripture passages, Chief Nama-kei, an old man, eagerly watched him and came morning after morning, inquiring: "Is it done? Can it speak?" Told at last that it was finished and could talk, Namakei said: "Make it speak to me, teacher. Let me hear it speak." The missionary read a few lines and the old man ecstatically shouted: "It does speak! It speaks my own language, too! Oh, give it to me!" Grasping the book, he turned it round and round, pressed it to his bosom, then handed it back, pleading, "Teacher, make the book speak to me." As Christ's sent ones, this, I take it, is our duty—to make this book speak to the business and bosoms of men; this book

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which is not so much an evolution of man as it is a revelation to man; this book which is more than a system of doctrine, a code of ethics, or a philosophy of life; this book which is the story of grace exceeding abundant, the good news that Jesus died to save men, and lives to bless and help them.

He was anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power. Ye shall receive power, said he, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be my witnesses. For witness-bearing the gift of the Spirit is essential. We must tarry until we are endued. We may be richly endowed without being endued at all. Endowment is a natural gift, enduement is a spiritual grace. When the obedient soul, through prayer, reaches up hands of faith, those hands do in some way touch currents of mysterious power. The penitent man who thus prays and believes and obeys is invincibly empowered. He experiences some such blessing as Principal Moule of Cambridge University describes, when through a more intelligent and conscious hold on the personality of the Spirit he obtained a decisive and appropriating view of the crucified Lord. "It was," he

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tells us, "a new development of insight into the love of God. It was a new contact with the inner and eternal movements of redeeming goodness and power, a new discovery in divine resources."

If we are to have power in our world mission, the anointing for service is essential. We must tarry for the promise of the Father before we can carry the gospel of the Son. Call it the Spirit-filled life, or the surrendered life, it matters little just so we have the experience. It is the birthright of every believer. It is for every one who will comply with the four conditions: Repentance, faith, prayer, obedience.

Evangelist Harold Stephens told me that his mother had what he called "the surrendered life," and it was beautiful. His father was a formal, powerless Christian, like so many of us. He was superintendent of a Sunday-school. Every Lord's Day, with a Bible under his arm, he walked to his church. His farm there in Canada adjoined that of a profane man, named Sandy Scott. Sandy's mother was a devoted Christian. One day she was not, for God had taken her. Meantime Mrs. Stephens had led her

husband into the deeper experience. Then one day a freshet washed away the fence that separated the two farms, and the cattle of Stephens destroyed a large part of Sandy's oat-field. Across the fields Sandy came striding like a madman. He found Mrs. Stephens at home, and cursed her, cursed her husband, cursed the cattle, threatened to kill them all; then strode back over the trampled grain. When Stephens returned, the wife said, "Husband, your testing-day has come"; and she told him the story. He would not take time to go around by the road, but hurried across the fields to Sandy's home. He was afraid of bodily violence if he entered the house; so he sat down on the doorstep. Sandy swung round him in a half circle, all the while cursing him, cursing his religion, cursing the cattle, threatening to kill him and his wife. When the big Scotchman's breath was exhausted, Stephens said: "Now Sandy, let me say something. You know I am a magistrate and could have you arrested for your threats; but, Sandy, I am not going to do it. Sandy, you have been cursing my religion, and much that you have said about

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it is true. I want to tell you, Sandy, that until recently I didn't have the right kind. I have been passing you every Sunday, and I never asked you to go to church with me. When your dear old mother died, I knew your heart was lonely, but I never came near to comfort you. Sandy, will you forgive me? Here are twenty dollars, all the money I have with me, and just as soon as we can estimate the damage, I'll pay you the balance." Then came a cry from Sandy: "O Mr. Stephens, don't talk to me like that. Curse me, damn me, fight me—anything but that. That's the way mother used to talk to me. O Mr. Stephens, don't talk to me like that, please don't talk to me like that!" And Sandy was subdued into the submissiveness of a penitent, sobbing child. You do not wonder, do you, that the next Sunday morning Sandy walked down the church aisle with Mr. Stephens, publicly confessed Jesus as his Lord, and dedicated his life to his mother's Saviour. May the Christ who was exalted to give repentance and who awaits our willingness to receive the Holy Spirit, grant us not only the experience of a saving faith, but also this en-

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duement of spiritual power, that during the coming days we may lay hold on sinful man with one hand and the Sinless Man with the other, and bring them face to face.

III

CHRIST'S CALL TO YOUTH

Come, follow me.

—Mark 10: 21.

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JESUS was on his last journey to Jerusalem. He had just left the house where he had blessed the children, when this man suddenly appeared. He was a *young* man; and Christ wants the young—with the strength of youth in their body, the fire of hope in their soul, and the swing of victory in their step. He was a *rich* man, for he was one who had great possessions. Jesus was no Bolshevik, indiscriminately denouncing wealth wherever he saw it. Among his most acceptable friends was the household at Bethany, a family of culture and affluence. This rich young ruler was also an *influential* man, for he was an office-bearer among his people; and Jesus is still looking for men of capacity and position. He was a *moral* man too, for he had kept his life clean; he had not taken his fling in the city, but had lived soberly and commendably. He was an *earnest* man, for he came running. He seems to have been as light of foot as a wild roe. He was a

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humble man, for he kneeled at Jesus' feet; and that ought to be easier for us than for him, because those feet have been pierced since the young ruler knelt there. He was an *inquiring* man, for he was anxious to hear what the most noted teacher of his day would say regarding the soul's quest after the chief good. He was a *lovable* man; for Jesus beholding him, looking him through and through, loved him. And yet despite his virtues and honors and possessions, he was a *dissatisfied* man. He felt the hollowness of the life he was living. At the center of his being he was conscious of an aching void. He had come to see that for heart-hunger the world offers "nothing between two dishes," for soul-thirst "only golden empty cups." He had learned what perhaps some of you have not yet learned—that the heart is triangular, while the world is spherical; and that if you put the whole round world into the triangular heart, there will always be left unfilled and unsatisfied corners.

He asked for something to do. Jesus gave it to him. Notice the verbs: "Go, sell, give, come, follow." His countenance fell;

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his brow darkened, was clouded, like the sky when overcast by an approaching storm. He frowned at the hard terms, and went away; and we do not read that he ever came back. In the *Inferno*, Dante pictures him as blown about like a withered leaf in the region of the lost—the shade of him who made through cowardice the great refusal.

The call of the Christ is a call to *a new principle of life*—the principle which the cross symbolizes and illustrates; the principle of self-denial, sacrifice, selflessness, service. A selfish man, George Macdonald tells us, differs from an insane man, in that while an insane man is *beside* himself, a selfish man is *inside* himself. This young man was inside himself; and so had never seen life from Christ's angle of vision. By being self-centered, his religious estimates constantly went awry. His theory did not square with his experience. His former manner of life had not brought him peace. He felt that there was yet a lack. As in the old Ptolemaic astronomy, figures and facts were ever at variance. There was a perpetual jumble of errors, because in the

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astronomer's calculations this little world of ours was made the center of the whole solar system. Nor were these mistakes eliminated, until it was discovered that the sun and not the earth is the center.

By making self rather than Christ the center, this young man made a double mistake: he set too high a value on his own attainments, and he overestimated his willingness to pay the price of betterment. He thought of himself more highly than he ought to think. Had he not, by holding himself aloof from vice, given full scope to the finer feelings? Did he not stand up in the synagogue every Sabbath and sing psalms? Could he not exhibit a large in-voice of good works? Even his withholding of gifts—was not that justified by custom, which made one-fifth the maximum of a man's possible giving? His self-esteem he thus fattened on the sweet morsels of his own merits. His life, as he saw it, needed not a new foundation, but only a bit of decoration.

He was self-deceived, as well as self-centered. He had never taken an accurate measurement of himself. And so when

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Christ's test was applied, he failed. He rode his camel up to the needle-gate, but found himself unwilling to dismount. He thought that he was anxious to work out his salvation, but found himself unwilling unless the terms were agreeable. He saw the dream-ladder of his soul reaching to heaven, but found himself unwilling to undertake the slow and toilsome climb. He was willing to pay a cash equivalent for perfection, provided he could get it as an immediate possession. He was disposed to make a purchase, but not to enter upon a pursuit. For a long walk with God, for tedious years of discipleship with Jesus, he had no place in his life-program. He was amazed at Christ's call, and turned away sorrowful.

Soon after his graduation from the university, a classmate of mine wrote me: "My life seems so tame, so full of ease and pleasure, so devoid of any heroic devotion to Christ's dear name; I bear in my body no branding-marks of his passion." Then he obeyed this call to youth. He took up his cross in real earnest. His ruling passion was now the sacrificial. Both in body and in soul he was branded with the marks of

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Christ's ownership and service. His life was no longer tame. Ease and pleasure were no longer his distinguishing traits. He labored more abundantly than we all, so much so that his brother described him as a motor-engine in trousers. He devoted himself heroically to everything for which Christian manhood stands. His enthusiasm was contagious. His joy was unbounded. His face was as radiant as a fresh spring morning, and his life was as fragrant.

The call of the Christ is a call to a *new leadership of life*. When the Master said, "Follow me," it was an invitation to follow him as teacher; to follow him as philanthropist; to follow him as Saviour; to follow him to Gethsemane's tears and homesickness; to follow him to Calvary, the place of self-crucifixion; to follow him to Olivet, with the glory of its risen life and ascension experience.

Following Christ's leadership *unifies* life, as with Livingstone, who, on his last birthday but one, wrote in his diary, "Lord Jesus, my king, my life, my all, I again dedicate my whole self to thee." Following Christ's leadership *concentrates* life, as with

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Paul, whose life-motto was "This one thing I do." Following Christ's leadership *satisfies* life, as with John who declared, "We beheld, with a satisfying vision, his glory." Following Christ's leadership *conserves* life. It renders forever impossible such an aimless, guideless, godless, purposeless career as that of Eugene de Luvois, whom Owen Meredith describes in *Lucile*:

Down the path of a life that led nowhere he trod,
Where his whims were his guides, and his will was
 his god,
And his pastime his purpose.

Like the man of whom I heard the President of Leland Stanford speak. While riding over a long, hot California road, he overtook a tramp with a bundle thrown over his shoulder. Thinking it selfish not to give a fellow traveler a lift when there was a vacant seat in his automobile, the President stopped his car and asked, "Wouldn't you like a ride, sir?" The man drawled out, "No, I don't think I would; I ain't goin' no place, and so I ain't in no hurry." Following Christ's leadership *glorifies* life, by making it a mission rather than a career.

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For a specific end was he born, and for a definite purpose did he come.

When Russell Conwell, at the age of thirty-seven, closed his law office in Boston and gave up a successful real estate business to become the pastor of a small congregation in Lexington where his first audience numbered only eighteen, his relatives were dumfounded and his worldly-minded friends thought him mentally unbalanced. But he felt that he was only turning from a career to a mission. He had a passion to live over again Christ's life of evangelizing, teaching, and healing. In Philadelphia he heard his Lord's call to erect a new and larger house of worship. The beginning was assured by a legacy of fifty-seven cents, left by a six-year-old girl. Some ridiculed the project as "Conwell's Folly." But the stately Baptist Temple, through whose baptismery he led six thousand converts, now stands as a monument to his undaunted faith, and still heralds the evangel which he so faithfully preached. In a young printer's request for instruction in Latin and Greek he again heard his Master's call, and built Temple University, which before his trans-

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lation had matriculated one hundred thousand students, in whose grateful hearts he still lives the more abundant life. In the serious illness of an orphan girl he later heard Jesus saying, "Follow me," and he followed on from two upper rooms to the completion of the great Samaritan Hospital, which still ministers to thousands of Christ's poor. How shall we compare the triumphs of a career which might have been his with the golden coronal which God set upon his mission? People know him as "the penniless millionaire." And the mourners go about the streets.

Christianity is not primarily assent to a creed, but devotion to a Person. We do not disparage the great creeds of Christendom. They are the natural and inevitable expression of their day. They were formulated in epochs of special religious activity and deep religious experience. They were forged in the furnace of Christian thought when spiritual fervor was at white heat. But a man may hold the form, without feeling the fire. Or it may be possible that the flame within the form has died down into gray ashes. Whenever a doctrine is not instinct with

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warmth and dynamic, it is time to come back to Him who "wrought with human hands the creed of creeds." That was the need of this young man. Dogma he professed in abundance. Not alone to the Decalogue did he assent, honestly but mistakenly claiming that he had from his youth loved God perfectly and man whole-heartedly; but he accepted all the uninspired, burdensome additions, such as the Sabbath restrictions. If, for example, a cask sprang a leak on the Sabbath, the plugging of the hole was forbidden. It involved Sabbath labor. If a tailor on the eve of the Sabbath stuck a needle in his coat and unwittingly carried that needle the next day, he was adjudged a Sabbath-breaker, for he was guilty of burden-bearing on a holy day. If a man was suffering from a toothache on the Sabbath, he might not even gargle his mouth with a soothing remedy. Thus the commandments of God were made of none effect. It was not a creed that this young man lacked. He needed a new leader.

When John Albert Broadus was a student at the University of Virginia, a fellow student brought him an autograph album,

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with the request that he write therein not only his name, but also a sentiment. That student was not a Christian; but he was gifted, moral, lovable; and Broadus with quick instinct wrote there these words that Jesus spoke to this young ruler, "One thing thou lackest." It was a delicate compliment with a searching thrust. Years afterward, when Doctor Broadus was president of the theological seminary at Louisville, there came to that institution a ministerial student from Texas, bearing to Doctor Broadus a message from a highly honored physician in the Lone Star State, saying, "I have never forgotten what you wrote in my album, and I trust that I have now found the one thing needful." However graced your life may be with genius and virtue, it is never complete till crowned with Christ's leadership.

Notice, finally, that the call of the Christ is a call to a *new enrichment of life*. "You shall have riches in heaven"; riches also on earth, wealth hereafter and here. For did not the Master at once add, "There is no one who has forsaken house, or brothers or sisters, or mother or father, or children or

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lands, for my sake and the gospel's, but will receive a hundred times as much now in this present life, and in the coming age life eternal."

There is the enrichment of sympathy which comes through suffering. His face was stedfastly set toward the cross. On his way to be crucified, he demanded the crucifixion of this man's love of money. Discipleship with him involved acquaintance with his sacrifice. He was the man of sorrows. Sin grieved him. Ingratitude stung him. He felt men's transgressions more keenly than he felt the nails. Men's unbelief pierced deeper into his heart than did the spear. The more we share his nature, the more we shall share his passion.

Our fellowship, John tells us, is with the Father as well as with the Son. God's very fatherhood involves suffering. When David cried, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son, would God I had died for thee," he suffered pangs such as his rebellious boy had never felt. Origen perceived this centuries ago, when he wrote, "Love is an agony"—an agony of yearning, an agony of sympathy. The extent of one's suffering is propor-

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tioned to one's capacity to know and feel. The child plays with his toys in one room, while his mother dies in another. He does not know, and therefore cannot feel. The infinite Father sympathizes with the finite many everywhere. In all their afflictions he is afflicted. Jesus was the visible expression of what was always in the Godhead. His anguish in Gethsemane was the overflow of the sorrow of God. In the heart-break on the cross we hear the cry of the broken-hearted God on the throne.

O mysterious condescension,
O abandonment sublime!
Very God himself is bearing
All the sufferings of time!

Henry Drummond was sent by the African Lakes Company into Central Africa to make a scientific examination of the country. Up to that time he had never been ill; he had never known loneliness; he had never come into close contact with bereavement. He almost resented the thought that suffering is inseparable from Christian service. But there in the Dark Continent, he saw the graves of such heroes and heroines

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as Bishop Mackenzie and Mrs. Livingstone. He saw the missionaries laid low with fever—some of them suffering in solitude, one of them buried beneath a huge baobab tree. Then he himself was attacked with fever. For a month he lay weak and depressed, the sun smiting his tent with pitiless heat, and the black clouds deluging him with rain-floods. When he returned to Scotland, friends noticed a splash of gray in his hair, and he said, "I've been in an atmosphere of death." That experience colored the remainder of his life. It broadened his thought. It hallowed his faith. It mellowed and deepened and enriched his sympathy; and he learned, as he never otherwise could have learned, that the innermost meaning of life is not discovered until we taste the cup of Christ's holy pain.

The enrichment of love, which comes through giving, is also included in this call and promise of Christ. Give, and it shall be given to you—full measure, pressed, shaken down, running over, shall they give into your bosom. Princely layman, prosperous merchant, Chester Kingsley when a young man prayed, "O God, grant me a

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hand to get and a heart to give." He was granted both; and as he distributed his benefactions, men poured into his bosom the wealth of their affection. With the emphasis of repetition, Martin Brewer Anderson, my revered university president, would say to us: "Young gentlemen, it has been the purpose of my life to live as far as I might for others; like my divine Master, to give myself for them, and so far to renew in myself his perfect life." For his self-devotion to us, out of full heart and boundless gratitude we could scarce light on a broken word to thank him with; but we gave ourselves to him in a love which the years have not weakened, for he spurs us yet with his remembered name.

Following Christ insures, too, the enrichment of joy that comes through serving. We do well to think of him as the man of sorrows, the thorn-crowned King of grief. But too often we forget that as he went about doing good the Holy Spirit filled him with rapturous joy. (Luke 10:21.) We forget that he exhorts us, while serving others, to rejoice and be glad (Matt. 5:12); that he desires not only to have his

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joy remain in us, but that in a life of self-forgetful service our joy may become perfect (John 15: 11); that just after saying, "Father, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do," he prayed that all his disciples might have his gladness fully repeated in their hearts. (John 17: 13.)

Take a piece of paper. Write down every pleasure that you can think of. Then from the list strike those that have either a sting or a stain in them, and the Christian has the first and best right to all that are left; and no sane person ought to crave a pleasure, if it will later sting the conscience or stain the soul. Unless we learn to be glad, we misinterpret the Christian life and misrepresent our Lord. He never created the atmosphere of that theological seminary, which had but four students. The first was a skeptic; the second was an agnostic; the third was a fanatic; and the fourth was a dyspeptic. He never intended that we should wear long faces, and go on a diet of gráham bread. He came to give the abundant life, and to set the joy-bells ringing.

Down in old Virginia, in a little frame

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meeting-house, unpainted and unlighted except by a few tallow candles that flickered on the walls, a boy yet in his teens, William Ellsworth Hatcher, sat in a back seat one night, listening. At the close of his sermon, the preacher had made an appeal for decisions. The audience was standing and singing. Some were moving toward the front, and penitently kneeling. The boy sat still, hardly knowing what to do. Then down the aisle came a venerable deacon, who stopped beside the boy; stooped down; and in a low voice asked, "Did you hear the call tonight?" "Yes," said young Hatcher, "I heard it, and feel that I ought to answer it, but I cannot start; something is holding me back." "Maybe," replied the aged deacon as he stretched out his wrinkled hand, "this may help you to start." Into that wide-open hand the boy put his, got strength by the touch, took his first step, turned his back toward the world, and began to follow Christ. The next night he made the decision which never came undone. He must tell some one. So he slipped through the crowd to his brother in the choir, and said: "Henry, I have good news

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for you; I can trust the Saviour." As the two walked homeward through the forest, a light fairer than the moon's silver radiance was shining. Bounding over the threshold, they roused their father from his sleep, while Henry blurted out: "Father, great news tonight; great news; your boy has come into the kingdom." Few have been the Christian men who have wrought more valiantly and joyously and triumphantly than did William Ellsworth Hatcher who responded to the call of Christ that night. Do you hear the call? Oh that you may answer in the language of the simple hymn:

Where he leads me I will follow,
I'll go with him all the way.

IV

THE UNDISCOURAGED CHRIST

He shall not fail nor be discouraged.

—Isaiah 42: 4.

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WE rub our eyes and look again, to make sure that the prophet really said this. Could he truthfully say it about anybody? Surely he was not speaking of Moses, whose life was cut short when just within sight of his cherished goal; nor of Elijah, for we see him sitting under a juniper tree, wishing that his life might be taken away. Failure and discouragement are as old as human history and as common as human tears. From time immemorial, as Longfellow said when he himself was rallying from depression, men's hearts though stout and brave have been like muffled drums beating funeral marches to the grave. Their eye has grown dim, their natural force has abated, and their work has been left a fragment.

Here is One of whom these things are not true. Chosen of God, loved of God, anointed of God, commissioned of God, he will not cry aloud nor lift up his voice in the streets. His methods will not be boisterous or revolutionary. The bruised reed—

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the depressed and distressed—he will not break. The wick growing dim—devotion however faint the flame, hearts feeble as if verging toward spiritual extinction—he will not quench. But he himself will not burn dim, nor be crushed. He will show no signs of the failure and discouragement which he compassionates in others. As a light, he will shine steadily. Unlike the reed, he will remain unbroken. He will exercise a divine persistency until the isles that long for his law shall be evangelized, and the whole world shall be filled with his glory. He is the unfailing and undiscouraged Christ.

“He shall not fail” *in his character*. Here men frequently fail at their strongest point. Moses was the meekest of men; but at the waters of Meribah he lost his poise, flew into a rage, and spoke unadvisedly with his lips. “Ye have heard of the patience of Job.” Also of his impatience. He cursed the day that gave him birth, and on his natal hour imprecated the stain of darkness. Peter declared his readiness to go with Jesus to prison and to death; yet was cowed by a housemaid, and denied the Lord who bought him.

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It has been observed that Christ is the highest ideal of all ages, of all nations, of all ranks, and of both sexes. For centuries the world's gray fathers longed for his advent. By faith they exulted in the hope of seeing his day and were glad. They expected him to bring salvation, and guide their feet in the way of peace. Now after nineteen hundred years we are looking back to him as the holy and perfect Son of God. Being detached from the merely local or temporary or accidental, he is the universal Man, and appeals alike to all races, no matter what the color of the skin or the angle of the face. He produces the same impression upon Krishna Pal, black-skinned but white-souled, who sang of the one that all our sorrows bore, as upon John Albert Broadus, who with his latest whispered breath was singing his great Redeemer's praise. He had the same charm for the sinning woman who bedewed his feet with her tears, as for Mary who anointed his head with the costly spikenard. He fascinated Roosevelt the President equally with McAuley, the wharf-rat and river-thief. As men find in him the exemplar of all that is

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virile and courageous and sacrificial, so womankind sit at his feet as the perfect Teacher of all that is pure and tender and beautiful. He is the incarnation of all moral perfections. His character is the greatest miracle of the centuries. Pilate's evaluation is the world's verdict: "I find no fault in the man."

"He shall not fail" *in his achievements*. From Macedonia Alexander set out to conquer the world. He stopped at Troy to fire his ambition at the grave of Achilles. He marched triumphantly through Greece, Persia, and India; then returned to Babylon where after a drunken debauch he died at the age of thirty-two. On St. Helena's lonely rock, the exiled Napoleon said, "My spirit shall return to France, and live in ceaseless revolutions." Standing at his magnificent sepulcher in Paris, we see evidence of what he did, but nothing of what he is doing. Pestalozzi blazed the way for our modern educational system, tried to combine manual and mental and moral training, became a laughing-stock for the educated and the ignorant, and died in poverty with a disappointed and broken heart. After

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twenty-three years of heroic service as explorer and missionary, Livingstone wrote, "My work seems vain." John Jacob Astor, who girdled the globe with his commercial transactions and accumulated thirty millions of dollars, when dying asked for a paper and pencil that he might write the sentence, "My life has been a failure." Sidney Lanier, musician and poet, who sang of the Crystal Christ in whom he could find no "if or yet, no mole, no flaw, no lapse, no shadow of defect," at the age of thirty-nine died with a thousand unwritten songs singing in his heart. So he told us. But when Jesus hung on the cross, though the mob wagged their heads and shot out their lips in derision, he could say, "It is finished," for he knew that he had released a movement which would set judgment in the earth.

"He shall not fail" *in his promises*. These are precious and exceeding great. The least of them he will faithfully perform. Unlike Macbeth's "juggling fiends," he will not keep the word of promise to our ear, and break it to our hope. He is the truth, and cannot lie. He is able to do in-

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finitely beyond our highest prayers. As in the New Testament days, so now men are doubting one promise. They are still asking: "What has become of his return? For from the time our forefathers fell asleep, things remain exactly as they were."

My friend, Dr. Frank Marsden Goodchild, tells of a young man who left Scotland to seek his fortune in our country, leaving behind him a lassie to whom he had plighted his troth. She was apprehensive about his leaving; but he comforted her with the assurance that he would be true and would surely come back. That promise she believed and hid in her heart. But as the months passed, his letters grew fewer and fewer, and finally stopped altogether. The bloom faded from her cheeks and the light from her eyes. She stole away to the riverside where at twilight they used to stroll and whisper their words of love; and there disconsolate she repeated the plaintive strain of Burns:

Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair,
How can ye sing, ye little birds,
And I sae weary, fu' o' care?

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Not thus will our Lord prove false. He will so come in like manner as men saw him go. In great power and glory will he return on the clouds, with a loud word of command, with an archangel's voice and the trumpet of God; every eye will see him, and they also who pierced him. I do not know when he will come. I do not think anybody does. It may be premillennial, or postmillennial. But he is coming.

In the crimson of the morning, in the whiteness of
the noon,

In the amber glory of the day's retreat,
In the midnight robed in darkness, or the gleaming
of the moon,

We listen for the coming of his feet.

Sandaled not with shoon of silver, girded not with
woven gold,

Weighted not with shimmering gems and odors
sweet,

But white-winged and shod with glory in the Hermon
light of old—

The glory of the coming of his feet.

He is coming, O my spirit! with his everlasting peace,

With his blessedness immortal and complete.

He is coming, O my spirit! and his coming brings
release.

I listen for the coming of his feet.

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“He shall not fail,” *because he has within himself the power of an endless life.* Henry Thomas Buckle had completed only two volumes of his projected history of civilization, when he suddenly died in Damascus, wailing, “My book! My book!” The death of Jesus was not the end of his work, but the condition of his power. In his manor-house at Beaconsfield, Disraeli, at the very summit of his surprising achievements, felt the death-waters rolling over him like a flood, and he expired, crying, “I am overwhelmed!” But death did not overwhelm Jesus. It did not even retard his high enterprise. He broke the bands of death, as Samson snapped the green withes that bound him—as a thread of tow is broken when it touches the fire. Soon after his election President Harding said to Vice-president Coolidge: “We have a hard job. Let us tackle it together.” But the lamented President is gone, and cannot help. Jesus said: “I died; but I am now alive until the ages of the ages.” He is still in the world, a veritable, vitalizing Presence, who in defiance of time and space is annexing to his empire human hearts and lives everywhere.

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“He shall not fail,” *because he was ordained to execute a plan whose end was seen from the beginning.* That plan has never been altered one iota. God is of one mind. None can turn him. In the formation of that plan he foresaw every exigency and provided for every emergency. For the execution of that plan he fully equipped his Son, whose mantle is already purple with universal empire. Regarding the battle of Shiloh, Grant said, “I thought I was going to fail, but I kept right on.” His thirty-eight thousand men were attacked by superior numbers, but he kept on till Buell arrived with reenforcements, and the silent man won his second great victory. In his conquest of the world the Captain of our salvation is keeping right on, with never a thought of failure; and he is expecting us to reenforce him. Dickens died with *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* unfinished and the plot undisclosed. Our Lord’s task is unfinished, but his plan is clearly revealed; and we are keeping right on with him till the uttermost parts of the earth become his possession.

“He shall not fail,” *because he possesses*

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all authority in heaven and on earth. Finney was called a heaven-born sovereign of the people. What was spoken in compliment of him may in truth be said of Jesus. He is the world's heaven-born Sovereign; and he will unfailingly extend his sovereignty till every knee shall bow to him.

When Charles Pelham Villiers went before the House of Commons, pleading a repeal of the corn laws, his plea was rejected. He then began a systematic agitation. At the end of six years popular sentiment was so aroused as to assure the overthrow of the statutes. When the House again assembled, a bill repealing the corn laws was introduced. While the bill was under discussion, a vast throng surrounded the building, and demanded that the sovereign will of the people be respected. One speaker arose and calling attention to the portentous sound of multitudinous voices outside, said, "The bill must go *through* this house, or *over* this house"; and the repeal bill was passed. Through our agency or over our protest, with us or without us, Christ's will shall become law. Back of him are marshaled the forces of omnipotence. All efforts

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to frustrate him are futile. He will not fail till he has set justice in the earth. Enlist on the winning side. Identify yourself with his mission. Let his purpose be accomplished through you, not in spite of you.

It is this unfailing Christ who is the undiscouraged Christ. "He shall not be discouraged."

He shall not be discouraged by the unbelief of men. His own brothers did not believe in him till the resurrection declared him to be the Son of God with power. Peter denied him. Thomas doubted him. Him by the hands of lawless men the Jews did crucify and slay. But he continued without a despairing thought. Voltaire averred that the discovery of the law of gravitation would demolish faith in Christianity. But Newton who discovered the law remained a Christian. Who now thinks of gravitation as militating against our faith? Strauss was confident that the Copernican system would destroy the Christian view of God and the world. But Copernicus, who gave his name to the system and who was called the mover of the earth, the establisher of the sun and heaven, asked

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to have written on his monument in the venerable church at Thun: "I crave not the favor which Paul received, nor the grace wherewith Thou didst pardon Peter; I only pray for that which Thou didst bestow from the cross upon the thief." Who now supposes that our salvation through Christ is imperiled by the earth's revolving round the sun, rather than by the sun's revolving round the earth?

The Mosque of Sancta Sophia at Constantinople was once a Christian church. Its material was gathered from all parts of the empire, including something from every celebrated pagan temple. Its eight serpentine columns were brought from the Temple of Diana at Ephesus. Its eight porphyry columns came from the Temple of the Sun at Baalbek, and were given by a patrician lady "for the salvation of her soul." For many years worshipers and visitors could detect the fragrant musk which Justinian mixed with the mortar when the building was erected. It is now profaned by the infidel Turk. Every object suggestive of Christian worship has been removed. Mosaics, containing representations of Christ, Mos-

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lem hands have daubed with coats of plaster. While there I did not smell any fragrant mortar, but I did notice the rugs turned all askew to make them face Meccaward. In the vaulted dome above the altar, the Mohammedan plaster which covered the figure of Jesus had begun to crack and scale off, enabling me to catch a dim view of his face and outstretched hand. For these nearly five centuries he has been within the shadow there, keeping watch above his own; and in the fulness of time all that has concealed him will be stripped off, the crescent will be replaced by the cross, the nations represented in the temple's material will become his, and the aroma of Christian devotion will fill the whole earth.

He shall not be discouraged by the slow progress of his kingdom. After Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood, he waited twelve years before publishing his findings. Fellow physicians ridiculed him as a crack-brained impostor; and he was compelled to wait twenty-five years more before the medical profession would recognize his discovery. If he could wait half a lifetime, surely Christ who is from ever-

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lasting to everlasting can afford to be patient. It is true that his speed time counts not, though with swiftest minutes winged. It is also true that he takes a step, and ages have rolled away. A thousand years with him are as a single day.

Within the three years of his earthly ministry few converts were made. It seemed preposterous to send forth twelve men to revolutionize the world. It looked ridiculous for Paul and his little band to lay siege to Europe. When Constantine declared Christianity to be the religion of his empire, not more than one person in every one hundred and fifty was even a nominal Christian. Now the proportion is about one in three. So some progress has been made. John Berridge, attracted to the poor and unprivileged about him, began to evangelize them, on the ground that his conscience impelled him to preach the gospel to every creature. He was summoned before his bishop with the rebuke, "As to your conscience, you know that preaching out of your parish is contrary to the canons of the church." Now the missionary impulse is everywhere recognized as the test of a standing or a

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falling church. When Francis Wayland became president of Brown University, a barrel of ale, to which all students had free access, was kept on tap in the cellar. What institution of learning now would dare offer a course in drunkenness as a part of its curriculum? Paton saw coral-girt Aniwa converted to Christ, the whole island no longer gathering at cannibal feasts, but congregating for worship at the Lord's Supper. Clough witnessed a repetition of Pentecost among the Telugus, seeing two thousand two hundred and twenty-two baptized on one July day, and before the end of that year adding nine thousand to the church. In the miraculous revival on the Congo, Thomas Moody has been watching Ethiopia stretch out her hands unto God and literally a nation crowding to be born.

Miss Anna Barclay, missionary to Cuba, told me that one night she was entertained in a native's home, where two Cuban women occupied the adjoining room. She slept but little on account of the incessant talk that came through the thin partition. After sleepless hours she heard one ask the other what time it was. From the sound she

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knew that this other had stepped from the bed, walked to the window, and looked at the sky where the Southern Cross was gleaming. Then Miss Barclay heard the woman say this beautiful thing: "It must be near the dawn, for the Cross is beginning to bend toward the earth." The Cross is beginning to bend toward the earth. It is daybreak everywhere. The light is coming, transforming the shadowed skies into russet and purple, and turning the clouds we have so much dreaded into piles of crimson and gold.

Finally, *he shall not be discouraged with his people*. This is the most wonderful thing of all; and the most comforting. What slow learners we are in the school of prayer and service! How prone we are to leave our first love and backslide from our first works! How frequently we fall into the Slough of Despond, with a downcast and disquieted soul! Hugh Latimer said: "When I live in a settled and stedfast assurance about the state of my soul, methinks I am as bold as a lion. I can laugh at all trouble, no affliction daunts me. But when I am eclipsed in my comforts, I am of so

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fearful a spirit that I could run into a mousehole." What timid programs we have undertaken! What small enterprises have satisfied us! What laggard obedience we have given to our Lord's last and unrepealed command to disciple all the nations! But he is persuaded better things of us, even things that accompany salvation.

In a great sermon at Winona Lake, I heard John Robertson relate a bit of his experience. He told us that, about a year before, he had felt so discouraged and unworthy as to think of giving up the ministry. He took the matter to Christ and wrestled all night in prayer. Near the break of day he looked up and said: "Lord, here is my commission. I resign." But the Master in infinite mercy replied: "You need not *resign* your commission. I will *re-sign* your commission." And since that time, he said he had been preaching under a re-signed commission. It surely sounded like it. He seized a trumpet and blew battles into our blood. He shamed our apathy. He pleaded with us to attempt great things. He challenged us to endure as seeing Him who is invisible, reminding

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us that only he who sees the invisible can do the impossible. As Jesus was not discouraged with Robertson, neither is he with us. And if he is not discouraged, why should we be? Why should we have a soul that sags with doubt? Why should we bate a jot of heart or hope? Instead of resigning our commission, let us ask Him to resign it; and then with a confidence born of assured triumph march breast-forward with Him who shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he has fully established his kingdom of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

V

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But the immense crowd, aware of this, followed him; and receiving them kindly, he proceeded to speak to them of the kingdom of God, and those who needed to be restored to health, he cured.

—Luke 9: 11 (*Weymouth's Translation*).

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AT noon one day I dismounted from my old gray horse at the foot of Hattin, whose double top rises 1,135 feet above sea-level and crowns an elevated plateau. Climbing to the summit, I eagerly surveyed the vast amphitheater where the Sermon on the Mount was delivered. There I caught my first sight of blue Galilee, twelve and a half miles long, eight at its greatest breadth; shaped like a big harp with its bow turned toward the northwest; still musical with the memories of our Lord's miracles and mercies; the world's most sacred sheet of water, lying there 682 feet below the Mediterranean.

Out of the past rose a vision of the nine cities, besides towns and villages, that once girdled its shores—synagogues, temples, theaters, hippodromes, castles, factories, wharves, Greek villas, Roman camps, triumphal arches; four thousand boats, if we may believe Josephus, plying the waters. To its edge I descended from the Mount

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through pulse patches with their purple blossoms, and field lilies of many colors nodding in the wind. On the west shore huddle funnel-like hills, through which contrary winds, often with suddenness, cause a very rough sea. To the north Hermon gleams, with its snow crown lifted ten thousand feet. From its high source in that slope the Jordan leaps and pours south through a narrow gorge into the lake. Eastward, some of the reddish brown cliffs, furrowed with torrent beds, reach a height of nearly two thousand feet. Between the river, that water-mirror, and those frowning rocks, lies a small grassy plain. It was to this quiet retreat that the crowd, aware of his whereabouts, followed Jesus.

He had three reasons for withdrawing to this uninhabited, secluded district: his sorrow caused by the death of the Baptist, whose head the daughter of Herodias had danced off; his knowledge that the twelve needed temporary relief from work; and his desire to instruct the apostolic group more perfectly. Crowd after crowd came from the neighboring towns until there was a multitude of five thousand men, besides

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women and children. Among them were the sick and lame, to whom he was the last hope, the remainder of life to be a weary burden if they found not help and healing in him. We can imagine the Twelve appointing Peter as chairman of their committee to inform the throng that Jesus was weary, and that as the best of the day was now gone it would be wise to hurry home for their suppers. But the suggestion had no sanction from the Master. He would not spare himself at the expense of the hungry and suffering. So he welcomed them, taught them concerning the kingdom, and cured those who needed to be healed.

Notice that the crowd's approach to him was *unseasonable*. They invaded his privacy, when he was bereaved of his cousin and forerunner, who had been cruelly beheaded. He truly mourns, it has been said, who mourns without a witness. Genuine grief shuns publicity. The sensitive mourner prays that his tears may be put into God's bottle, when no curious eyes are watching. In the little company of his intimate friends, the Son of man was seeking assuagement of his sorrow in a solitary place, when the

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multitude intruded itself. This was also an interruption of his rest. Neither he nor his disciples had leisure so much as to eat. I have always sympathized with the old washerwoman who said, "The first thing I do when I get to heaven will be to rest for one thousand years." The other day I saw a poem entitled "Too Tired to Trust." Jesus wished his disciples to recover from their weariness, and to gather strength for subsequent toil. The crowd not only broke their rest, but gave them extra work, and prevented the private instruction which their Teacher had planned to give them. Solitude, wrote Milton, is sometimes best society. Our Lord's seclusion was constantly disturbed. In the night he received Nicodemus. While sitting weary on the well-curb, he taught the Samaritan woman. But he never said, "Here comes that limping sinner again." Having caught this spirit from his Master, my sainted friend, John Calvin Carman, chose as his motto, "The man who needs to see me is the man I want to see."

The crowd's approach to Christ was *eager*. Coming by land, they ran together

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there from all the cities. They forgot the question of food. He had an irresistible fascination. It is so still. Doré was so fascinated with him that within a single year he painted fifty pictures of the Face which the surging multitude now sought. One of a Boston coterie remarked that Jesus was amiable, but not strong. Wendell Phillips replied, "You must estimate the strength of Jesus by the men whom he has mastered." These have not been men of gentle and emotional temperament only. They have been the intellectual and moral giants of the world. Said Richard Watson Gilder:

If Jesus Christ is a man—
And only a man—I say
That of all mankind I cleave to him,
And to him will I cleave alway.

If Jesus Christ is a God—
And the only God—I swear
I will follow him through heaven and hell,
The earth, the sea, and the air!

On this occasion the crowd were also *fearless* in their approach. The common people had come to feel that he understood

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them, and sympathized with them. Therefore they heard him gladly, while he spoke as never man spoke, appealed to their better natures, eased them of their burdens, and ministered to their bodies. He was the approachable Christ, and they felt it. He carried with him a something which always seemed to say, "Come unto me"; and they fearlessly came.

In our party that day, when we crossed from Tiberias to Galilee's northeastern shore, was Dr. Wayland Hoyt, who told me of his first visit to Henry Ward Beecher. Hoyt was just a young pastor in Brooklyn, and Beecher was already a luminary shining over two continents. Up the steps of the great preacher's home the younger man tremblingly climbed, put out his hand to ring the door-bell; then feeling a sinking in his heart, he turned back down the steps. There he plucked up courage enough to return to the door. He was admitted, and was delighted with his affable friend, who quickly relieved him of all embarrassment, put him at perfect ease, and made him feel how foolish his misgiving had been. We are exhorted to approach the throne of

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grace with boldness, freedom of speech, that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely aid.

Unseasonable, eager and fearless in their approach, the crowd were also *unceremonious*. They came just as they were. The only preparation required was to feel their need of him. All through his public ministry the people found this to be true: the rich, like Joseph the kind-hearted and upright secret disciple, who learned that he must either divulge his secret or lose his discipleship; the publican, like Zacchæus who by his tax exactions was grinding the face of the poor; the outcast, like the notorious woman who "bedewed" his feet with her tears, then with her hair wiped the tears away, while she pressed kisses on his feet and from her alabaster flask poured perfume over them, those feet that had brought her good tidings.

I heard Sam Hadley say that when he realized how terribly lost he was, he cried: "O Christ, I'm in a bad hole! Help me out!" He told us that we could not find those words in the Prayer Book, but that Jesus seemed to know what he meant. He

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had never learned how to pray. No sentences from Scripture or ritual were stored in his memory. But he did the best he could with the material he had; and our Lord brought him up out of his horrible pit, out of the miry clay, set his feet upon a rock, established his goings, and put a new song in his mouth. Come to Him just as you are—without one plea; poor, wretched, blind; waiting not to rid your soul of one dark blot; tossed about with many a conflict, many a doubt. He will receive, will welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve. His love has broken every barrier down. Come without delay.

Now consider what the Gospels say about his attitude toward this crowd. He *compassionated* them. He felt compassion for them. This of good passions, Josephus declared, was most of all lost among the Jews. Jesus was moved with pity for these people, because they were like shepherdless sheep, fleeced and flung down. He was the pitying Christ, not the incarnation of “a double-faced somewhat”—force controlled by intelligence—which a certain modern skeptical scientist thinks is back of all phenomena.

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Men may expect no compassion from a double-faced somewhat. Jesus was the Word that came from the bosom of the Father. He disclosed both the mind and the heart of God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh and tented among us." What is a word? It is the symbol of an idea. Without the word the idea lies unexpressed. When the Word became flesh, God's thought became a man. He unveiled the mind of God. In him men heard the speech of God. This only begotten Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, declared the Father—interpreted the Father. He not only expounded the mind of the Father, but uncovered the heart of the Father—that yearning heart which he described in the parable of the Prodigal, the heart of love and pity and compassion which he manifested toward the multitude, and which he still yearns to have men understand. For he is the same yesterday and today.

He *welcomed* the crowd—received them kindly, so Luke here tells us. The disciples, thinking chiefly about food, advised sending

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the people away. Jesus said, "They need not go." He knew the two methods of dealing with a difficulty. One is to evade it; the other, to solve it. The disciples were for evasion; he for solution. So he gladly granted the access desired, and proceeded to feed and teach and heal.

Tennyson had a growing dislike for the common people. Because he could not bear the thought of "herding with common foreheads," he had his home at Haslemere so protected as to exclude the "profane herd" from a sight of himself as he strolled about his garden. Dickens told Russell Conwell that he was working with the hope of securing enough money before he died to surround his little estate at Gad's Hill with a high wall such as Tennyson built around his garden. Like the poet laureate, he had become so weary of publicity "that he wished to shut himself in completely from the world, and allow nothing to come in the gate but the necessities of life and one or two of his most trusted friends." Great and good as Tennyson and Dickens were, in this one respect they were certainly not like their Lord. He was ever the accessible

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Christ, with a welcome for the crowd, yearning that men should come to him.

He also *taught* this multitude. He began to teach them many things. So Mark writes. His theme, Luke here informs us, was the kingdom of God: the kingdom which seeks the conquest not of countries but of consciences, and which counts its subjects not by heads but by hearts; the kingdom which is within us, a reign of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit; the kingdom of truth from which all error is banished; the kingdom of love from which selfishness in every form is excluded; the kingdom of liberty in which oppression is nowhere possible; the social kingdom whose spirit of love impels to fellowship, and whose spirit of sonship regulates conduct according to the law of brotherhood. Did ever man teach like this man?

At the height of his popularity, Doctor Jowett remarked: "A crowd is very imposing if it is yielding disciples for Christ. What would be the use of a huge mine if we got no ore out of it? And what is the use of a multitude if we get no jewels for Christ?" As out of this huge mine of

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humanity Jesus was trying to get crown jewels for the kingdom of heaven, so out of every human mine must we try to gather the gems for his kingdom—all the pure ones, all the bright ones, including little children—having them ready when he comes to make up his jewels.

He *healed* their sick. So Matthew tells us about the crowd that day. Those who needed to be restored to health, he cured. He had sympathy for men's bodies. He was touched by their infirmities. He was not like Peter in West's painting "Christ the Healer." The apostle is there pictured with averted face, holding his nose and dreading infection from the disease around him. Jesus took our weaknesses and bore our sicknesses. The healing of his seamless dress is still by our beds of pain. If any medical fact can be considered to stand firm, declared Professor William James, it is that in certain environments prayer may contribute to recovery, and should be encouraged as a therapeutic measure. On the wall of his hospital Ambroise Paré, the father of modern surgery, wrote, "I dressed the wound, and God healed it."

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This is not a recognition of the fatuous notion that all disease is mental; that diphtheria is an error of the mortal mind; that you get rid of facts by denying their existence. Nor is it a sanction of every healer who professes to cure through the power of Christ. When Dowie was claiming to work healing miracles, being, as he averred, Elijah reincarnated, Doctor Munhall said to me that the difference between Elijah and Dowie was, that Elijah was fed by the ravens, and Dowie by the gulls. Without controversy, the Great Physician can, when he wills, restore without material remedies. But the fact is that he commonly uses human means in the realm of sickness, as he ordinarily employs physical means in other departments of life. Hospitals are his life-saving stations. Nurses are his ministering servants. Medicines are his gifts through men of creative power, men trained in the art of selection and combination. Physicians are or ought to be his representatives; and thousands of them are able to bring their patients into contact with the Christ, whose health was contagious, and whose healing he poured into the bruises of men's souls.

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He *fed* the crowd. This all four of the Gospels record. Five thousand men, besides women and children, were seated in banqueting parties. Mark, in his graphic way, says that they reclined "garden-beds, garden-beds," by hundreds and by fifties. Their orderly arrangement, their gay garments—red, blue, yellow—made them look like flower-beds, bordered with verdure. Conspicuous in the midst stood Jesus, holding in his hands a few loaves and fishes; his face uplifted in prayer. What a scene! The quiet of nature's afternoon; a clear sky of unbroken blue; the westering sun firing the mountains with purple glory and glittering with dazzling sheen on the surface of the lake; the little plain carpeted with living green; the picturesque crowd arranged in garden-plots; the Wonder-worker blessing, and breaking, and giving to his disciples.

The chief lesson here is that which he announced the next day, "I am the bread of life." The discourse and the miracle interpret each other. He began both to do and to teach. That was his way. First the work; then the teaching. If a new-born

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babe is merely "a hunger and a cry," there are times when a man seems to be little more than a bundle of physical wants. The hunger, if not the cry, is still there. It is useless to talk to a man about the bread that came down from heaven, when he is hungry for the crumbs that fall from our table. He can live on hope for the future; but for the imperative present he needs bread and meat. Jesus believed in the gospel of barley loaves, because he himself had been an hungered and athirst. He turned hunger into an opportunity to feed and teach. So should we.

Finally, he *rested* the crowd. He distributed the loaves and fishes to those who were resting on the ground. So Weymouth translates the words of John. Jesus was the great rest-giver. Through him the fatigued and loaded found rest for their bodies, as well as for their souls. In a Boston Mission I heard a rescued woman define what it means to rejoice. She said, "To rejoice in an object is to let the heart rest in it." Her heart was resting in Christ, therefore she rejoiced in him; and the ruddy glow of health in her soul imparted new life to

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her body. Our Lord was always wooing people to take his yoke upon them and to learn from him, that they might find rest. Not in vain did the toiling, burdened crowd listen to his gracious invitation: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me."

Doré has done these words in colors. Perhaps you have seen his painting "The Vale of Tears," the canvas twenty-one feet long, and fourteen high, hanging in the Doré Gallery, London, the last work of the great Alsatian. A long shadowy valley flanked by cliffs and crags, the frowning gorge filled with all sorts and conditions of earth's weary and burdened ones. The king is there in cloth of purple and gold, his head wreathed with laurel, his cloak stained with blood from heart-wounds; the poor, the aged, the maimed, the blind; the prisoner in chains, the slave with his clinging manacles, the soldier worn and scarred, and the lepers on their solitary shelf of rock; the profligate branded with sin, and the erring woman whose pleasure has left only stings and stains; a woman uncomforted

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by friends, as her dead child lies by her side; a dying mother holding in her arms the babe that is soon to be orphaned; in the lead of this motley throng a young girl pointing to Jesus who is entering the far end of the pass. He is clothed in white, and is bearing his cross. Bending over him is a glorious rainbow of hope. His hand is upraised, as he invites all these weary and now expectant souls to seek in him their relief and comfort.

This is the text that rested Andrew Fuller, the missionary pioneer. In his search for soul rest he had found no help from his pastor, grim and stern, nor from the books which he had collected and diligently read. Then one day he heard Christ saying, "Come unto me." His soul responded, and he has left us an account of what happened. He answered: "I must and I will! Yes, I will, I will! I trust my soul—my lost and sinful soul—in his hands! I come, I come! And if I perish, I perish!" He found rest; and tells us that he would have found it sooner, had he not entertained the notion that he had no warrant for coming to Christ without some previous qualification. Do

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not wait for any "qualification." Come now, just as you are. Say with Fuller: "I must and I will! Yes, I will! I trust my soul to him! I come, I come!"

VI

BRINGING THE BIBLE BACK

*They spake unto Ezra the scribe to
bring the book of the law of Moses.*

—Nehemiah 8: 1.

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THE setting of this text is one of the most interesting stories in the Old Testament. Neglect of the book had led to grievous oppression, Sabbath desecration, mixed marriage, and withheld offerings. Safe at last within their protecting walls, in whose building they had daily wrought from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared, the people now turned toward God, and asked that his word be read and interpreted to them. This recovered Bible brought repentance, revival, reformation, and very great gladness.

This is the pressing need of our day—to bring the Bible back. Dr. Howard Osgood, one of the American committee for the revision of the Old Testament and one of the greatest scholars that our country has produced, wrote me a letter in which he said:

I have lost years of my life in studying what men have said about the Bible. If I had sought more the teaching of Christ in prayer, with a ceaseless reading and rereading of the word itself until it be-

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came part and parcel of my thinking, then I might have made some progress in believing and speaking the truth.

It is this Book, which furnishes the basis of all Christian training, beginning with our children and continuing through the life of the full-grown man, that we must bring back—this Book, which is not so much an evolution of man, as it is a revelation to man; this Book, which is no “mental mirage,” as some would have us think, no “lovely myth wrought by poetic souls out of old-world fancies,” no “creation of human genius, touched by the fire of emotion”; this Book, which is more than a system of doctrines, a code of ethics, or a philosophy of life; this Book, which is the supernatural evangel of the blessed God—the glad tidings that Christ the Son of God died to save men, and lives to help and bless them; this Book, which is therefore no cunningly devised fable, but is “the speech of God in Christ”; this Book, whose teachings are as applicable to the life and problems of today, as to those of the Apostolic age—for, while mankind advances (as Goethe observed), man remains the same; this Book, whose

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dynamic has already made the world one neighborhood, and is now working to convert it into one brotherhood; this Book, with the old news and new news and good news, whose program—the spiritual rebirth of the individual, the social regeneration of the community, and the moral redemption of the race—commends itself to the most modern man. For, to satisfy completely the requirements of the new situation, it is not our duty, Professor Eucken tells us, to fight for a new religion; we have only to kindle into freshness of life the fathomless depths of Christianity.

One Christmas Day, Secretary of Labor James Davis stood in the little Welsh Baptist Church of Sharon, Pennsylvania, the church of his father and mother, and told of the prayers which he learned at his mother's knee, the hymns which he heard her sing as she lulled him to sleep, the faith which her love implanted in the wondering heart of his childhood—the faith which gave him the moral stamina to meet great problems, to strive through strife and turmoil, unafraid; the old-fashioned faith to which we must hold fast, else (he affirmed)

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neither individual nor nation can endure. He declared that as for himself he still adheres to the old-time religion which as a boy he learned within those walls—the old-time religion of faith and hope and charity, which abides with him still as a daily consolation and a sure refuge. He recalled the first religious lessons which he learned in the church, lessons that have kept him on the right road when traveling the right road was difficult; lessons from his Sunday-school teacher, a man who worked at a forge in the small mill where he toiled as a lad; lessons from the preacher, whose sermons were born in his heart, whose religion was not coldly statistical, charted by mental engineers and analyzed by theological chemists—a man who did not read his Bible hypercritically, but founded on it a deep and abiding faith. Then Secretary Davis condensed into this one brief sentence the burning conviction of his soul: “The world never needed the Bible more than it does today.”

We must bring it back into our *personal experience*. “Thy word,” said the Psalmist, “have I laid up in mine heart, that I

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might not sin against thee" (119:11). Paul exhorts us to "let the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our hearts unto God" (Col. 3:16). If we are to live a holy, intelligent, songful life, this Word which is "living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb. 4:12) must be operative at the very center of our motives, impulses, affections, and volitions. "It is inspired of God, and is useful for convincing, for correction of error, and for instruction in right doing; so that we may ourselves be complete, perfectly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).

A young man whom I had baptized was studying for the ministry. After reaching his senior year in a theological seminary, he told me that he had come to think that the inspiration of David and Paul differed not at all from that of Tennyson and Longfellow. I replied: "On your theory some things look very strange to me. About three thousand years ago, it is supposed, a man named David wrote a brief gem,

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the Shepherd Psalm, which has been comforting people all down the ages. And about two thousand years ago it is supposed that another man named Paul wrote a hymn of heavenly love, the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. After three thousand years of enlightenment and development and experience in the first case, and two thousand in the second, it would seem that somebody else must have written something equally good. I should think it ought to be far better. Please tell me where it is, and I'll begin preaching it to my people next Sunday." He hesitated; then flushed; then with the look of one who had suffered loss, he confessed, "I'll have to admit that my mind is in a state of flux." With all the sympathy and urgency of a spiritual father, I said, "My boy, if you don't get some of these fundamentals settled before any church calls you, you'll find that your congregation also will be in a state of flux—the people will flow away from you, because you'll have no saving message."

Only those who are begotten again by the living, last word of God hold firmly to faith as their foundation, without ever

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shifting from the hope that rests on the gospel. The reason so many are being led astray by the cults and fads and isms of the day is that they are not grounded in this word of Christ. "Ye do err," said he, "not knowing the Scriptures." In his volume *First and Last Things*, H. G. Wells builds his religion not on the Bible, but on metaphysics. He is doubtful about immortality, declares that the personality of Jesus never has attracted him, and reaches the shocking conclusion that as for himself he does not care whether in the last resort he is seated on a throne, or drunk, or dying in a kitchen! On reading such a confession, we are inclined to accept the revised definition of metaphysics, namely, the search of a blind man in a dark room for a black cat which isn't there! For a sane, vitalizing, conserving experience, we must give people the old Book, and sing anew with our fathers,

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word.

The Bible must be brought back into *the home circle*. Only ten per cent. of our

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American homes have a family altar. In the vast majority of them no Scripture is read and no prayer offered. This accounts for much of the unhappiness and many of the disastrous ruptures.

The home is marred or destroyed by one or more of eight causes: (1) Hasty marriage. It is never safe to act on blind impulse or a passing fancy. A relationship so sacred and binding should be preceded by mutual knowledge—a knowledge that inspires an assured confidence and brings a growing gladness. (2) Easy divorce. The very ease with which the marriage bond may be broken invites an appeal to the courts, and is largely responsible for the alarming fact that the divorce evil has been growing nearly three times as fast as the population. In the thirty-five recognized grounds for divorce there is little difficulty in finding either a reason or a pretext. (3) Intemperate habits. This was once a most fruitful cause for disastrous separation. Now happily the legalized saloon has gone; and with it, much of the trouble in the home. Drunkenness, however, with its attendant sins has not wholly disappeared.

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Some one facetiously remarked, "Where moonshine whisky comes from is a secret still." But it comes. (4) Marital infidelity. There can be no permanent peace where either the husband or the wife is unfaithful to the marriage vow. Nor should there be. This constitutes the sole Scriptural ground for divorce. Sexual purity is demanded of man and woman alike. A double standard of morals is intolerable. (5) Differing religions. Continued happiness when the groom and bride hold radically different religious views is possible; but marriage in such a case is usually a doubtful experiment. The tendency is either to drift farther apart until the break comes or together to drift away from religion entirely. (6) Interfering relatives. When a young couple set up a home, they should be allowed to work out their own future, without interference from either side of the family. No seeds of dissatisfaction or suspicion or discord should be sown from the outside. A nagger sometimes drives a separating wedge between two hearts, and keeps on driving until the cleavage becomes final. (7) Imperfect adjustment. It takes time for two

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lives to grow into each other. Not infrequently there is supposed to be a fatal incompatibility, when all that is needed is adjustment. Bear and forbear. Be patient and forgiving. Be silent in the presence of a fault. Home has been defined as the place where we are treated best and grumble most. Sing more and grumble less. In a fit of irritation do not fly to divorce for relief. (8) Selfish ambitions. The husband may become so absorbed in work, money, position, or pleasure as to account his family of secondary importance, and thereby begin an estrangement which ends in disrupting the home. Or the wife may be so ambitious to scintillate in society as to embarrass her husband by her extravagance, and forfeit the love of both husband and child by her neglect of the home. In the career of the selfishly ambitious, a soul-mate often supplants the helpmeet.

In the family where God's book is given its rightful place, it proves a spiritual anti-septic for every hurt and a shock-absorber for every jar. How can it be otherwise, when we read such passages as these: "Be tenderly affectioned one to another" (Rom.

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12: 10); "Bear ye one another's burdens" (Gal. 6: 2); "Fathers, do not irritate your children" (Eph. 6: 4); "Let your speech be always with grace" (Col. 4: 6); "Love is the link of the perfect life" (Col. 3: 14).

Visits to the home of James Boorman Colgate, generous benefactor of the university that bears his name, linger with me like the fragrance of long-preserved sandalwood. His residence at Yonkers stood on a spacious lawn, which he used to say was a paradise to look at and a purgatory to take care of. For years it was his custom to gather his servants as well as his family into his library for morning worship. Everybody in the circle, extending round the room, was given a Bible, and read a verse in turn. The chapter finished, Mr. Colgate would rise and carry the entire household to God in prayer; and from such an atmosphere he went to his business in New York, leaving the influence of that morning hour to sweeten the home life through the day.

The Bible ought to be brought back into *the public school*. Some of our States like New York, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, now forbid its use in the schools. The Supreme

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Court of Illinois excluded it on the ground that it is a sectarian book. This claim was denied by the Supreme Courts of Kentucky and Texas. With those commonwealths which have either a constitutional or statutory provision barring denominational teaching, we fully agree. We believe in absolute religious liberty, and in the complete separation of Church and State. The school is not training religionists but citizens, without regard to sect. The plea here is that carefully selected portions, looking toward the building of citizenship, shall be daily read, without comment.

“The Sermon on the Mount,” said President Lincoln, “contains the sum of all law and justice.” Why should not the youth in our schools be saturated with such a document? “Hold fast,” President Grant urged, “to the Bible as the sheet-anchor of our liberties. Write its precepts on your hearts, and practise them in your lives. To the influence of this book we are indebted for the progress made in true civilization, and to this we must look for our guide in the future.” Why should not our future citizens be early instructed as to this

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sheet-anchor, this progress-inspirer, and this surest guide? Doctor Mullins calls the Bible "the literary expression of the accumulated life-adjustments and life-experiences of men who have had direct dealings with God." Why should not our boys and girls be taught to make a life rather than a living, by being shown some of these adjustments and led into some of these experiences?

Without a knowledge of this book, how can anybody possibly understand literature and art—the Book which has inspired the best poems, the finest paintings, and the noblest sculpture? Dante, Milton, and Shakespeare; Raphael, Angelo, and Da Vinci are half lost to those who are unversed in the sacred writings. And this ignorance on the part of many is amazing. While teaching a class of young men, I asked one of them (a high-school graduate and a promising inventor) what vision it was that Peter saw at Joppa. To which he hesitatingly stammered out in reply, "Was he the fellow who lay at the foot of the ladder?" He did not know the difference between Peter's sheet filled with beasts and Jacob's pillow stuffed with dreams. When

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a group of students at a State university were recently examined as to their knowledge of the Old Testament, one-half the number could not so much as name ten of the books, while nine of the one hundred and forty could not name a single book. This seems incredible at any American educational center, where leaders in all departments of life are being trained. The best text-book is the book that best shapes a life; and for that purpose no book is comparable to the Book of books.

The Bible must also be brought back into *the church life*. "The people of America," says Roger Babson, "have not the bankers to thank for their security and prosperity, but rather the preachers and the churches. The churches alone provide the solution to the great problems facing us." Shortly before his lamented death, President Harding declared, "If the church fails, the whole world will go down." The surest way to prevent the church's failure, is to keep it true to the word and will and work of its Founder. Wherever the unique inspiration and authority of the Scriptures are denied, there dearth and deadness prevail. Where

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the pulpit is weak, the preacher is without a prophet's message; an authoritative gospel has been diluted, and the wooing note lost. But the pulpit whose occupant has a soul bathed in the passion of Calvary is not a waning force. The evangel of Jesus is still the power of God; and the preacher or teacher who clearly interprets it, earnestly advocates it, and personally incarnates it, has a tremendous opportunity in this great new day.

In a Union Pastors' Conference I heard a minister read a paper on the Bible. It was impossible to discover what he believed. He left us high in the air, without foothold or goal. In the general discussion a colored member was asked to participate. He arose and with considerable diffidence said: "That kind of preaching would never do among my people. You'd never get anybody saved that way. It reminds me of when I was a boy. I was very fond of sugar, and I did love to appropriate it stealthily from my mother's sugar-bowl, and it tasted mighty good. Later I grew old enough to go off to college, and while there I learned to analyze sugar; but I never enjoyed analyz-

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ing it half as much as I enjoyed eating it. Now I have forgotten most of the chemical properties of sugar, but, thank God, I haven't lost my liking for it. And so while you white brethren are analyzing the word of God, I'm just going on and tell people to taste and see that the Lord is good."

It is this kind of preaching, in season and out of season, that the churches need, the kind of preaching that leaves a distinct religious deposit in the soul of the worshiper at every service. An enveloping atmosphere of rationalism and materialism is asphyxiating and paralyzing many churches. The New Testament must be brought back. It must be made the norm of our organization and activity. Often accused of taking our theology from the seventeenth century, we evangelicals claim to go back farther than that. We get it from the first century. Our Lord and his apostles taught that the church is a spiritual organism, a body of believers called out from the world, the membership consisting of such only as have been renewed by God's Spirit and are by faith vitally joined to Christ. Such a church, militantly endeavoring to continue

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and complete the whole program of Jesus, is essential in our day.

Surely there is urgent need of bringing the Bible back into *the industrial world*. Suppose that men would practise Matthew 7:12. Read what the Son of man there commands, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Conduct regulated by the Golden Rule, rather than by the rule of gold. No class hatred. No selfish rivalry. No social injustice. No labor troubles. No wage conflicts. No capitalistic oppression. No unfair distribution of profits. No working-day so long as to throw physically broken men and women on the human slag-pile and dump-heap. No Dives clothed in purple and fine linen and faring sumptuously every day, so long as any Lazarus, in his looped and windowed raggedness, hungers for bread.

Finally, the Bible must be brought back into *international relations*. If there is any doubt on that point, look around you. Who wants Bolshevik Russia in the family of nations? Russian Bolshevism is but Marxian socialism full-grown. Marx de-

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clared that before there can be any progress among men, they must rid themselves of four things—the abominable idea of a God, the superstition of religion, the figment of conscience, and the insane notion of immortality. Soon after being foisted into power, Trotzky shouted, “I have no place for God in my program.” He and his ilk have sought to abolish religion. Their conscience seems to be cauterized. They are content to have their portion in this life. Behold a government without God, without religion, without conscience, and without the immortal hope.

“The best of allies you can procure for us,” said Garibaldi, “is the Bible; that will bring us the reality of religion.” After the Washington Conference on Disarmament, Admiral Baron Kato declared, “We must now look to the leaders of religion.” At the American Luncheon Club in London about the same time, Lord Robert Cecil pleaded for a return of Bible teachings. No treaties will hold, unless dominated by the Christian spirit. They will be little more than “scraps of paper” so long as national selfishness prevails. The League

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of Nations or any World Court will be of value, just in proportion as the signatory powers obey the precepts of Him who from a common origin created all nations. When the Prince of Peace is given the preeminence assigned him by prophet and apostle, there will be peace on earth, and good-will to men everywhere.

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VII

YOUR DIVINE CREDIT

Not that I seek for the gift; but I seek for the fruit that increaseth to your account.

—*Philippians 4: 17.*

A more literal rendering would be: "*Not that I crave the gift; but I do crave the fruit that accrues to your account.*"

A free translation, from which my topic is taken, is that of Moffatt: "*It is not the money I am anxious for; what I am anxious for is the interest that accumulates in this way to your divine credit.*"

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THE Philippian church was noted for its poverty and its liberality. The members began to give as soon as they were converted. Their abounding joy made them rich in faith and generous with their possessions. Four times they made special contributions to Paul. While at Thessalonica he sought to support himself with his own hands, that he might not be burdensome to others, or be suspected of having mercenary motives. When his day's preaching was done, he took up yards of rough hair-cloth, and, long after the mantle of darkness had hid from sight the last faint pulse of quivering light, wrought at his trade as a tent-maker. News of the toiling apostle reached Philippi. Converts there determined to relieve his necessity. Setting out on the same road which they had seen him take when persecution drove him from the city, they twice carried to him their remittance. After his departure from Macedonia, when he was in Corinth, working in

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the tent-factory of Aquila, his meager earnings were again pieced out by a donation from the Macedonians, foremost among whom were these same Philippians.

Their fourth special contribution caused the writing of this letter. The apostle was now a prisoner at Rome. The hands which once had earned a living by sewing hair-cloth were bound with chains. The clank was soon heard in Philippi, and thought for him revived—put forth fresh shoots, as the word suggests. All hearts went out to him in his fetters, which Polycarp called “the diadems of the truly elect.” The care-taking love of these dear people seized the earliest opportunity of adding to his comfort. A collection was taken, and Epaphroditus was sent to carry it a distance of seven hundred miles. No railways, or automobiles, or airplanes in those days. It was a long and hazardous journey, but it was accomplished, and the love-token was laid in the prisoner’s hands. No wonder it exhaled a fragrant odor. It was an alabaster cruse from his best-loved church. Epaphroditus was returning. By him Paul sent this letter, commending their generous spirit

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and enlarging on their past liberality. But lest they regard his praise as a hint to send another offering, he hastened to correct the possible misunderstanding, declaring that he desired nothing for himself, but only the blessings that would abound to them. He did not need the money as much as they needed to give it. For whatever his outward experiences, he had learned to be content; while they, if they ceased to give, would cease to be like God. And so he encouraged these growing Christians to cultivate rather than restrain their beneficent impulses, not that he might be the selfish recipient of their benefactions, but that fruit might accrue to their own account. It is these two thoughts that I wish to consider—the money given, and the benefit accrued.

We usually speak of the Christian graces as being love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control. And there we stop. But Scripture adds another. When Paul observed the liberality of the Macedonian churches, he exhorted Titus to complete *this grace* in the Corinthians also; and writing to the

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people at Corinth about the necessity of giving, he said, "As ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all earnestness, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in *this grace* also." Giving, therefore, is to be placed side by side with faith and hope and love. It is a part of Christian worship, as truly as is prayer or praise; and the man whose religious equipose is disturbed by the taking of a collection was not well balanced before the collection was taken.

In the sixteenth chapter of First Corinthians, the eighth and ninth chapters of Second Corinthians, the apostle mentions nine characteristics of giving. (1) Personal: "Each one of you." (2) Consecrated: "First gave their own selves to the Lord." Start right. (3) Proportionate: "As he may prosper." (4) Regular: "On the first day of the week." (5) Voluntary: "A willing mind." (6) Sacrificial: "Gave out of their poverty." (7) Cheerful: "God loveth a cheerful giver." (8) Urgent: "Praying us to receive the gift." Giving is a thing not to be avoided but sought. (9) Growing: "The grace of God

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which is being bestowed." In the bounty of such Christians there is no winter; "an autumn 'tis that grows the more by reaping."

Of these nine characteristics I can here emphasize only four. Giving should be *personal*. "Each one of you" was Paul's rule. We ought to cultivate all the virtues and link them in a symmetrical character. Symmetry is impossible, so long as stinginess is a dominant trait. Orthodox creed is not so great a menace as orthodox greed. Every Christian can contribute something, if his heart drives him like a goad. When God requested offerings for the tabernacle, he commanded Moses to receive from the people gold, silver, brass, onyx stones, blue and purple and scarlet cloth, fine linen, and spices for sweet incense. But if any were unable to offer such gifts, they were to bring a bit of woven goat's hair, or a little oil for the light.

Looking at the magnificent temple, with its carved stone-work and majestic towers, appearing like a mount of alabaster topped with golden spires, the disciples regarded it as a worthy offering to God, representing

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the sacrifices of forty-six years. In admiration of the costly structure, they seem to have forgotten a poverty-stricken widow whom Jesus had just observed dropping two mites into the treasury, and they exclaimed, "Master, behold, what immense stones and what beautiful buildings!" But his thoughts were still busy with the sacrificial gift of that widow, who out of her neediness had given all she had to live on. They saw the temple as the place of God's dwelling. He saw the widow's soul as such a shrine, with its altar of sacrifice and psalm of praise. The poor are not deprived of the luxury of giving; nor are their limited means a sufficient ground for withholding their pitance. Jesus is still sitting over against the church treasury, watching. He who saw the widow's gift will see yours, however small it may be. Put in your mites, with your hearts, and Christ will weigh mites, hearts, and all.

If ever there were any churches that might justly claim exemption from giving, they were the churches located in Macedonia, like those at Perea, Thessalonica, and Philippi. That country had been so devas-

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tated by three wars that the people appealed successfully to the Roman emperor for a decrease in their taxes. The Christians there were in much affliction, and might have urged their own severe trials as an excuse for not contributing toward the comfort of others. They were in deep poverty, and might have used their limited possessions as an argument against distributing to the necessity of saints elsewhere. But their boundless joy even amid their deep poverty, their pauperism to the depth, their abysmal penury, overflowed to increase their generous liberality. They besought Paul with much entreaty that they might have fellowship with him in ministering to the needy. The explanation of this urgency is found in the statement that first they gave their own selves to God. Like J. Lewis Shuck, the young Virginian, who when an offering for missions was taken at his church laid on the plate a card bearing the word "Myself," and at the age of twenty-three was on his way to China as a missionary. When self is on the collection-plate, the pocketbook is never closed.

Giving should be *proportionate*. The Old

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Testament law required a tithe. "Bring ye the whole tenth into the storehouse." We can hardly find a safer rule at the outset. The open windows are still conditioned by the whole tenth. That law has never been abrogated. Start with the tithe as a minimum, and go on to larger things. A man whose heart was better than his arithmetic said that he could not afford to give one-tenth, but thought he could manage to give one-fifth. It would be a salutary thing if some men who feel unable to give a tenth of their income would succeed in giving at least a fifth.

"As we may prosper" is the New Testament rule. If we are more prosperous this year than last, the sum contributed then will not be satisfactory to God now. It ought to be increased. We dare not hold the fat world in our arms, and sing an evangel of ease to our souls. If prosperity is not so lavish with us this year, before we diminish our offering let us be sure that we were giving a just sum last year. God considers not so much the amount as the proportion which the gift bears to our ability; not what we give but what we have left.

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A stingy farmer, who had persistently refused to attend Wesley's meetings, was one day induced to go. The preacher's first point was "Make all you can," and the farmer was delighted. The second point was "Save all you can." This threw the farmer into ecstasy, and he thought how foolish he had been to absent himself from such preaching. But the third point was "Give all you can"; and that last point, the farmer said, spoiled the whole sermon. Such a niggardly spirit is the scandal of Christendom. The giving is not proportioned to the wealth. Alexander the copper-smith, who did Paul much evil, is still working mischief in the church. When Jesus holds out his pierced hand for a gift, too many try to cover the nailprint with a copper. Today that hand is extended to you. If you are unable to do more, lay a penny over the scar. If you are able to fill the wounded Hand with your gathered gold, do it. As he has prospered you, so will he hold you responsible when his book of accounts is opened.

Giving should be *regular*. "Upon the first day of the week," was Paul's plan. We

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cannot give to every cause. It is not required that we be like Paula, Jerome's famous nun, who was so lavish with her money that she died in beggary, was buried in a borrowed shroud, and left a multitude of debts which she had contracted for charitable purposes. Liberality must have banks and channels, or be wasted by its very diffusion. Having chosen the objects to be financially supported and decided the utmost that can possibly be contributed, our giving then ought to be regular, not haphazard or spasmodic, or impulsive. If we let feelings determine us, selfish impulses may diminish the gift or cut it off entirely. No better method has ever been found than setting aside systematically a definite amount as the Lord's portion. This was Paul's recommendation—on the first day of every week let each of you by himself lay up, making a store of it, whatever he may be prospered in.

Giving should be *cheerful*. A half dollar with a whole heart is better than a whole dollar with a half heart. There is such a thing as the grief of giving, but it has no place in the Christian system. These Philip-

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pians gave of their own accord. No outward pressure was needed. Theirs was a self-induced liberality. To them beneficence was benevolence in action. A knowledge of the giver's habitual reluctance compels us to urge and beg and entreat. We use the pulpit as a corkscrew to pull out of people what should be given spontaneously. If we give grudgingly—with pain or grief, as the apostle's word implies, God will not accept our gift. If our giving is prompted by any other than a kindly spirit, others will not be blessed. As Ophelia said to Hamlet when she returned his jewels, "To the noble mind rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind." But if while cultivating the grace of giving we also cultivate the art of giving gracefully, we shall find that others out of a full heart and boundless gratitude can scarce light on a broken word to thank us with.

It is more blessed to give than to receive. So said our Lord—a saying which Paul rescued from oblivion. That saying exhales an aroma from the uplands of the soul. "It is a flash that illumines depths of Deity. It gives us a photograph of the divine heart." It condenses into a single

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sentence the earthly life of Jesus. He himself tasted this greater blessedness. Though he abounded in heavenly riches, yet for our sakes he emptied himself, and came a long and lonely way to make us rich. In the light of that sublime example, the example of him whose grace we are supposed to know, it ought to be happier for us to give than to get. According as each of us purposes in his heart, so let us contribute, not with a sour mind or under compulsion, but with a cheerfulness born of fellowship with the great Giver.

As to the fruits of giving, Paul mentions four: The assurance of an exhaustless supply; the experience of an enriched heart; the joy of an acceptable sacrifice; and the knowledge of a divine credit.

Giving insures an exhaustless supply. The Philippians had given according to their poverty. God would reward them according to his riches. Immediately the apostle adds: "My God, so great is his wealth of glory in Christ Jesus, will fully supply every need of yours." We must not clip this promise. Some of us take our shears and snip off all material benefits, leaving only

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spiritual blessings to be supplied. But when Paul said "every need," he meant *every need*. In his own case it included cloak and books and victuals. This is an encouragement for us. If we give, it will be given to us—full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will both God and man pour into our laps. The same measure we use will be measured to us in return.

My next-door neighbor requested his little boy to keep a cash account. Examining the account some weeks later, the father was surprised to find entries like these: "Candy, five cents. Ball, ten cents. Wasted, three cents. Carfare, five cents. Pencil, two cents. Wasted, one cent." When asked to explain that item "wasted," the lad replied: "Oh, that's what I put into the church collection! When I bought candy or a ball or a pencil, I got something back for my money. But when I put it into church, nobody gave me anything; so I just mark it 'wasted.'" Carleton is only one of many who regard as a waste the money given to the church. In their spiritual myopia they do not see that such gifts,

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rightly offered, are treasures laid up in heaven; and they have forgotten the ancient promise that in giving to the needy we are lending to the Lord, who always repays his loans with interest.

Giving enriches the giver's heart. This it does by cultivating his sympathies. Paul speaks of the Philippians as having fellowship with himself in the matter of giving and receiving. In giving to others we are brought into sympathetic union with them and are enriched by gaining possession of their love. In giving to others we receive their gratitude and share their blessedness. Scanty fare for one will often make a royal feast for two. In giving to others we are giving to Christ, and he returns our gift with his blessing added. You give yourself, a man, to God; he renders you back a saint unto yourself! In giving to others we imitate God, and receive of his fulness. If he ceased to give, he would cease to be God. If we cease to give, we cease to be like God.

The Dead Sea is a dead sea because it is constantly receiving and never giving. Its streams are all turned inward. It has no outlet. Six and a half million tons of water

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fall into it every day. In contents it is one-quarter solid substances. Its seven per cent. chlorid of sodium renders it briny, while its chlorid of magnesium makes it bitter and nauseous. Not so with beautiful blue Galilee. Its waters are sweet, because it receives from the Jordan on the north, and gives through the Jordan on the south. As chairman of the American Red Cross, Judge John Barton Payne has a full-time job, without financial remuneration; yet he says: "I get the biggest salary in the world—personal satisfaction. The thing that gives man his greatest happiness is service to others." The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that refreshes others shall be refreshed also himself. He who sows with a niggardly hand will also reap a niggardly crop; and he who sows with blessings, with blessings also shall he reap.

Giving furnishes an acceptable sacrifice. The contribution made by these Philippians is called a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God. David prayed that his prayers might be set forth before Jehovah as incense, and the lifting up of his hands as the evening sacrifice. Here we are told that

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giving as well as praying is an odor of a sweet smell to God. When Jesus gave himself up to death on our behalf, Paul tells us that God regarded the offering as a sweet-smelling savor. To do good and to communicate, literally, well-doing and fellowship, that is, giving as an embodiment and expression of fellowship, forget not, for with such sacrifices God is greatly pleased. So we read in the book of Hebrews. The gifts of the Christian therefore, especially those self-sacrificing gifts which remind God of his well-beloved Son, supply a fragrance that evermore ascends heavenward.

"Put your hand here," said a man to me one day. There was a bulge in his upper outside coat pocket. It felt and sounded like an accumulation of small coins. "That," said he, "is the way I save my money for missions. You see," he continued, "when I buy something that costs me twelve cents and pay for it with a dime and a nickel, I put the three cents into this pocket, and so with other purchases, always saving the change for missionary purposes." He was expecting me to commend him; but I knew that just then he was

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preparing to make an extended and expensive winter trip to Florida. How could such crumbs and scraps and left-overs possibly remind God of his Son's sacrificial gift? At the interlocking of the ages Jesus appeared once for all, to abolish sin by the sacrifice of himself. To the efficacy of his finished work on the cross we can add nothing. But we can by a whole-hearted giving of self and substance so remind God of that perfect offering as to make our gift a sacrifice yielding a fragrant odor.

Giving increases our credit account. Paul sought not so much to stimulate the liberality of the Philippians as to increase their recompense. He craved the profit that would accrue to their credit. A picture without sky has little glory. A life with no heaven in view has less to charm. Why all this money-getting, "all this mill-horse round of toil unless we are, mill-horse like, driving a shaft that goes through the wall, and grinds something which falls into bags that wax not old on the other side." Jesus urges us to amass wealth for ourselves in heaven, where there is no gnawing moth or corroding rust or unregenerate thief. In

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that treasure-house Paul declared that he had made his deposit with One who is able to keep it till the great Day. When Barnabas sold his real estate and laid the money at the apostles' feet, he was augmenting his divine credit. Never did he have a piece of property that brought him such returns. The fruit of that farm he has already enjoyed for nineteen hundred years.

I have in my church a housemaid, an alien by birth. She is a stranger and foreigner no more, as she now surely shares the membership of the saints and belongs to God's own household. She is intelligent, and in no way fanatical. She just has a real case of Christianity. In my absence one day she brought to the church office a long sealed envelope. My secretary said: "I hope this isn't your last will and testament." She replied: "No, it is only a little something for Jesus." When the envelope was opened, it was found to contain \$100 in savings-stamps. "How I wish," exclaimed the secretary, "that the pastor was here to see what you have given." The giver replied, "Oh, he would not care for one like me." Next day I wrote her a letter to let her

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know that I did care; meantime noting that the motive of her gift was not to be seen of men but of God. A few days later back she came with another \$100 in stamps. This time I was there, and protested. I said: "Emma, I hope you understand that the church does not expect this of you, and I doubt if Jesus does. You ought to save a part of your earnings, so that in case of sickness or other misfortune you may not be in actual want." Her reply made me feel very small: "All I have belongs to my Master, and I wish to do this for him." That was genuine stewardship. Not long afterward she returned with \$120 in cash. Enclosed with the money was a hymn, whose words I had often *seen* and *sung*, but which I had never really *read* before. This time I read them through my tears:

Saviour, thy dying love
Thou gavest me;
Nor should I aught withhold,
Dear Lord, from thee;
In love my soul would bow,
My heart fulfil its vow,
Some offering bring thee now,
Something for thee.

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O'er the blest mercy-seat,
Pleading for me,
My feeble faith looks up,
Jesus to thee;
Help me the cross to bear,
Thy wondrous love declare,
Some song to raise, or prayer,
Something for thee.

Give me a faithful heart—
Likeness to thee,
That each departing day
Henceforth may see
Some work of love begun,
Some deed of kindness done,
Some wanderer sought and won,
Something for thee.

All that I am and have—
Thy gifts so free,
In joy, in grief, through life,
Dear Lord, for thee!
And when thy face I see,
My ransomed soul shall be,
Through all eternity,
Something for thee.

A week passed, and then she surprised us with another gift of ten \$20 bills. Again my protest was futile. "My wants," she insisted, "are very simple. I don't spend

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much on myself; and so through the years I have been able to save something for Jesus." I went away for a few weeks' vacation. On my return, I found that blessed girl in the office once more, this time with a government bond for \$100, and all the words of the hymn beginning:

O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
That in thine ocean depths, its flow
May richer, fuller be.

Then came our city-wide soul-winning campaign under Evangelist Sunday. She sent me a ten-dollar gold piece with which to start the collection one night; and the following Lord's Day pushed into my hand two one hundred dollar bills to help carry on the work. Previous to these special gifts, she had frequently come with an extra \$5.00 for missions. On each side of her duplex church envelope she has long been enclosing 50 cents a week, and every three months she puts \$5.00 into our fellowship fund for the poor.

My treasurer says, "If ever Emma is in need, and the White Temple does not help

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her to the limit, I hope the White Temple will go to smash." And so do I, though I have little anxiety about Emma. She has a large credit account at the Bank that will never fail. Such giving in the Philippian church Paul commended. Would that it were common everywhere in these days.

VIII

GIVING THANKS IN EVERYTHING

*In everything give thanks; for this
is the will of God.*

—1 Thessalonians 5: 18.

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PAUL here urges three things that are apparently impossible—to rejoice alway, to pray without ceasing, and to give thanks in everything; the duty of perpetual joy, the duty of perpetual prayer, and the duty of perpetual thanksgiving.

The highest type of human life is a life of joyful praise. God himself is called the blessed or happy God. To live in unbroken fellowship with him is to enjoy unbroken gladness. Perpetual joy is possible therefore when the sense of his love and care is homed in the soul. By unceasing prayer is meant not an act, but an attitude; not a posture, but a life. This is Tennyson's thought when he tells us that a triple beatitude is pronounced on all whose lives are faithful prayers. We pray without ceasing, when we practise the presence of God—do our work, live our life, under the restraint and inspiration of his nearness.

These two seeming impossibilities—rejoice always and pray unceasingly—are

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united in this third: in everything give thanks. As perpetual joy becomes actual when we know the love of God; and perpetual prayer becomes actual when we practise the presence of God; so perpetual thanksgiving becomes actual when we understand the will of God.

Notice the command. "In everything give thanks." It is akin to those other words: "Giving thanks always for all things"; "In everything with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God"; "As therefore ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, abounding in thanksgiving"; "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, and be ye thankful"; "Continue steadfast in prayer, watching therein with thanksgiving." We are not simply to make this afternoon a psalm, but every afternoon; as George Herbert puts it:

Not thankful when it pleaseth me,
As if thy blessings had spare days;
But such a heart whose pulse may be
Thy praise.

When a barrel of pork was received into
Franklin's boyhood home and grace before

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meals had been said for several days, the boy inquired why it would not do just as well to ask a blessing over the whole barrel, and let the thanking stop at that. Many still feel as he felt. They want to lump their thanksgiving, instead of daily repeating it. Milton brands ingratitude as besotted and base. Shakespeare makes King Lear denounce it as a marble-hearted fiend, declaring that to have a thankless child is sharper than a serpent's tooth. If blessings are continuous, our thankfulness should have no spare days. On our national calendar only one day is set aside for Thanksgiving, wherein President and Governor exhort us to cease from our daily work, and in our homes and accustomed places of worship devoutly give thanks to the Almighty for the many and great favors we have received. It would be preferable to have just one day wherein to voice our croaks and complaints, our disappointments and dissatisfactions, our grunts and growls and grumbles, and leave the other three hundred and sixty-four days in which to bless the Lord, who satisfies our mouth with good things, forgives all our iniquities, redeems

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our life from destruction, and crowns us with lovingkindness and tender mercies. As Ebenezer Scrooge, when Christmas got into his heart, tried to keep it every day, so let us honor Thanksgiving in our hearts, and observe it all the year.

In everything give thanks—when God's paths drop fatness, and when the fields yield no meat; when the valleys are covered with corn, and when there is no fruit in the vines; when gold and silver are multiplied, and when riches eaglelike make themselves swift wings; when climbing ambition's ladder as fast as breath and brain and brawn will permit, and when prostrate on the earth watching the dream-ladder of the soul recede into darkness; when the tides of health are so full that bare existence is a joy, and when every muscle has become a highway for the running to and fro of pain; when in joyful possession of every faculty, and when eyes are rolling in irksome night. In talking to a friend about the hymn, "I shall see him face to face," Fanny Crosby, who lost her sight when six months old, said, "I am so much happier than you, for I have no remembrance of any human face,

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and the first face I shall look upon will be my Master's."

Our Lord was thankful for *daily food*. When according to Mark's picturesque description, the five thousand had reclined in groups of fifty and one hundred, looking like so many garden-beds, with their gay colors and borders of green grass, Jesus took the loaves and fishes, and having given thanks, he distributed them to the crowd. He was thankful, too, for *personal gifts*. When Mary with lavish and uncalculating love broke the alabaster vase of costly nard and anointed his head and his feet, he not only defended her against her critics, but immortalized her for having wrought on him a beautiful work. He was thankful also for *valued friends*. Clement of Alexandria tells us that Christ did not say (in Luke 16: 9) give, or provide, or benefit, or aid, but *make* a friend; and that friendship springs, not from a single act of giving, but from unceasing kindness and from long intercourse. The disciples, whom Jesus chose that they might be with him, he made into friends by his unceasing kindness and long intercourse, and gratefully com-

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mended them for their companionship in his temptations. And he was thankful for *helpful service*. This, he declared, would be the ground of his decision at the final judgment. Even seated on the throne, in another world and under new relationships, he will recall and fondly recognize the kindnesses done to him by his people when they give food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, hospitality to the stranger, clothing to the naked, medicine to the sick, and sympathy to the prisoner. *Revealed truth* was another blessing for which he was thankful. Grieved at the unreasonable opposition of religious teachers, and gladdened by the prompt and joyous acceptance of himself by the simple-minded, he thanked the Father for hiding his evangel from the accepted custodians of wisdom and unveiling it to those who were as unversed in scribe-lore as babes. Even God himself cannot teach a man who is vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind. The pride of such an ignoramus is like the stopper in an empty bottle—it renders the inner vacuum inaccessible. For *answered prayer* also he was thankful. The objections concerning immutable law and

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established order did not prevent his praying. He who knew God best prayed often and long, especially and with deep emotion in the great crises of his life. Coming to the grave of his friend Lazarus, he lifted his tear-filled eyes to heaven and said: "Father, I thank thee that thou heardest me; and I knew that thou hearest me always." He was thankful, too, for *intelligent faith*. When Peter confessed him as the Son of the living God, he met the confession with fervent gratitude, apparent in the words, "Blessed art thou, Simon." To Howard also, an eleven-year-old boy whose mother thought him too young to unite with the church, Jesus doubtless said the same thing. When I asked him what he understood by repentance, he replied, "To repent is to apologize to God." I responded, "Flesh and blood did not reveal that unto thee." With such spiritual intelligence our Lord is still pleased. Most mysterious of all, he was thankful for *anticipated suffering*. At the Last Supper, he took a cup, symbol of his shed blood, and the bread, symbol of his broken body; and having in each case given thanks, he passed it to the disciples.

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Then they sang a hymn; and with that song on his lips, he went to his agony in the garden and on the cross. In everything *he* gave thanks.

There are times when it is comparatively easy to be thankful—days of sunshine when God conspicuously crowns our year with his goodness, each day having its jewels in the golden coronal. Then the soul gladly chants its hymn of praise. There are hours when we are recovering from the shock of a great grief. The sorrow begins to seem holy. The light streams through our falling tears, forming a beauteous rainbow of hope. We are able to see the purpose, the “afterward,” of affliction. Then, too, we can say quietly, “Father, I thank thee.” But there are other periods when to give thanks in sincerity is among the most difficult of all tasks—periods when life seems one monotonous, meaningless, mill-horse round of toil; periods when every day dawns and dies with the same drab experience; periods when the heart’s anxiety and uncertainty furrow the face with care-lines; periods when we are unable to read the meaning of our tears, when no peaceable fruit of right-

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eousness hangs within our reach. Mary Reed, of leper fame, told us that she had learned to say, "Thy will be done," not with a sigh but with a song. We cannot sing. The most and best that we can do is, like David, to give thanks at the remembrance of God's holiness. We begin with a moan, even if we end with a psalm. We say:

Not in the trial's furnace glow,
Not in the crucible of woe,
May sweet incense of thanks arise.
Durst we but lift our streaming eyes,
Thy help, thy pity to implore,
Almighty Lord, what can we more?

"In everything give thanks"—yea, Lord,
The chastened soul adores thy word.
Aye, swing the heavenly censers low,
Receive the heart's rich overflow
Of glad thanksgiving for the pain,
The loss, which wrought its surer gain.

Observe *the reason for perpetual thanksgiving*. "This is the will of God." Many think of that will as something quite apart from human interests, as a kind of impersonal overriding force before which we must either bend or break. But if God is

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love then the will of God is the will of love, and is constantly working toward our highest good. This is the will of God, it is written, even your sanctification—not getting on in the world, but getting up in the world; not possessions, but character; not temporary pleasures, but that holiness which issues in eternal joy; not what short-sighted men call success, but the attainment of the divine likeness.

Henry Ford said to Dean Marquis: “I can have anything that money can buy; but the things I most want are the things that money cannot buy.” So rich is he that, according to the daily press, he found in a bank one day \$2,000,000 which he did not know he had. Never since the morning stars sang together has there been a better illustration of the fact that *things* cannot satisfy men. To be thankful therefore only for that which fattens us is for immortals to sink to the level of the brute creation—the level of indulgence and gluttony.

Our life, if it moves within the will of God, is a plan of God. He knows our potentialities, as Campbell Morgan suggests; knows the lines along which we shall soonest

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realize his thoughts for us. Every triumph, every disappointment, every whelming sorrow become links in the chain of a perfect whole. All contribute toward the making of a full-grown manhood and womanhood. We may not understand the relation of the present to the past or future. But such a relation is ever in his mind. The apparently disconnected and irrelevant events are parts of the divine mosaic. What to us is confusion is to him infinite order. It is "all under rule." To them that love him he is making all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose. With this understanding, we can say with Frances Ridley Havergal, at a time when her cherished plans were shattered, "The will of God is *delicious*."

The life here must be interpreted by the life there. For the life there is continuous with the life here. Death will not bring *us* to a pause. Death, to use the words of another, is not a period of darkness at the bottom of life's page, but simply a comma, where, the leaf being turned, the day breaks and the shadows flee away. Immortality is not a pleasurable hope pushed to the point

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of belief. It is an experience upon which we have already entered. We are not going to be immortal. We are immortal, and at times are conscious of unfettered and inexhaustible powers. God has set eternity in the heart—perpetuity in the heart, everlastingness in the heart, forever in the heart. We sing about eyes strained to see the approach of eternity's shore. We need not wait for such a drawing near. Eternity is within us. It is not enough to say that the breath of eternity doth wrap us round. Eternity is within us. Any attempt to measure the life there by the life here is like laying an inch-tape on infinitude. What folly therefore to be thankful only for such things as minister to the seen and temporal! God is developing character and capacity, the only possessions that we can carry with us when in one throbbing moment we step from world to world. In proportion as we understand God's will and God's plan and God's interpretation, it becomes clear how we may in everything give thanks.

It is especially fitting that we, in *thankful prayer*, should acknowledge all God's benefits. "Think" and "thank" are closely re-

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lated terms. Gratitude has been called the memory of the heart. As we count our blessings one by one, we surely cannot do less than pause daily long enough to say, "Father, I thank thee."

It was gratitude for common blessings that led our forefathers to observe the first Thanksgiving Day. Their only crops were barley and Indian corn, "the peas not being worth gathering, for as we feared they were too late sown." So runs the old record. But for the meager harvest of 1621 Governor Bradford appointed "an especial day on which to give especial thanks for all their mercies." In Virginia the colonists were still more grateful. They wondered why the Puritans and Pilgrims did not leave their cold and barren coasts and come down into God's country, where, one of the Virginians said, the rivers teemed with bass and shad, where wild turkeys weighed sixty pounds, where raccoons were as good as lambs, 'possums as good as hams, and artichokes as good as yams. If those settlers, with so few blessings to brighten their privations, could be thus thankful, shall we not by prayer and supplication

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with thanksgiving acknowledge God's goodness?

And let us give thanks in *praiseful song*. The psalmist exhorts us to sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving. To do this, our forefathers knew but few tunes; and when any one of these was sung, it sounded (as one of their ministers declared) like five hundred tunes roared out at once. "I myself," he said, "have twice in one note paused to take breath." One of their thankful hymns contained the following astounding stanza:

Ye monsters of the bubbling deep,
Your Maker's praises spout;
Up from the sands, ye codlings, peep,
And wag your tails about.

With the varied riches of our music, stately and appropriate, we are without excuse if we do not in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs sing and make melody with our heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father.

Said the lamented and beloved Dan Crawford, translator, author, and missionary to Congo-land:

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From the day I landed, the devil lurked by my side. And I saw that there was one thing he specially wanted. He wanted to sap my gladness, wanted to steal my song, to steal my laugh, to rob me of the joy of my life. But one day I read in this dear old Book, "My heart is fixed, I will sing"—that is, I'm going in for singing as a habit of my life! It was not much, only a few words, but it has shed glory in my darkest places ever since. And friends, when you find your song in peril, just run to David, and get a little snatch of one of his songs. Fix your heart on it. Make singing a habit.

Finally, we ought to give thanks through *beneficent service*. For after all, the best kind of thanksgiving is thanks-living. As Gene Stratton Porter makes the Harvester say:

Just enjoy to the depths of your soul—that's worship. Be thankful for everything—that's praising God as the birds praise him. And "do unto others"—that's all there is of love and religion combined.

In the oldest extant sermon preached in America, a sermon on "The Sin and Danger of Self Love," Robert Cushman, one of the founders of Plymouth Colony, said:

How liveth such a man? How is he clothed? How is he fed? He is my brother, my associate.

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We ventured our lives together here and had a hard brunt of it, and we are in league together. Is his labor harder than mine? Surely, I will ease him. Hath he no bed to lie on? I have two; I will lend him one. Hath he no apparel? I have two suits; I will give him one of them. Eats he coarse fare, bread and water, and I have better? Surely, I will part stakes. His wants must be my wants, his sorrows my sorrows, his sickness my sickness, and his welfare my welfare.

That was good doctrine for the Pilgrims at Plymouth in 1621, and it is equally good doctrine for us in this year of grace.

IX

LIFE'S CHIEF AMBITION

*We are ambitious, whether at home or away
from home, to be well-pleasing to him.*

—2 Corinthians 5: 9.

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THIS is a literal translation of Paul's words. Weymouth renders them a little more freely, "We make it our ambition, whether at home or in exile, to please him perfectly." Bengel calls it the sole legitimate ambition. It was enunciated by a man whose brain was as big as his heart. His head was as full of light as his heart was of devout heat. He was a living proof that there need be no conflict between a luminous mind and a devotional spirit. With an intellect of the first order he combined the heart of Christ. Reared amid the Greek culture of Tarsus, he later went to Jerusalem for religious instruction, and there sat at the feet of the great teacher, Gamaliel. But he was no book-worm, boring through musty volumes, indifferent to this toiling, moiling world. He had the shepherd heart, like Ben Lovel, whom Irving Bacheller describes in his story of the Christian. Lovel was a musician, a poet, and a philosopher, yet chose to work at shoe-making, because he felt that he must

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walk with his brothers and know what it is to be a man. So this commanding genius, who has been credited with saving Christianity from perishing in the cradle, early learned the trade of tent-maker, and long wrought as an artisan. He could sympathize with men who wore a callus on either their hand or their brain. His language all his life long was vibrant with human affairs. He was a man who lived at high pressure—a man of eager, impetuous strength.

Best of all, he was a man with a transforming religious experience; an experience which completely shattered all his original plans, and turned his manifold and masterly activities into new and nobler channels. For one midday, you recall, while he was journeying, suddenly a great light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, wrapped him in sheets of blinding splendor. Amid that outstreaming glory he saw the Lord, and every other ambition of his life went down before that vision. He was no longer Saul the Pharisee, whose punctilious aim was to obey the law, but Paul the Christian, whose very chiefest desire was to please

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Christ. From that hour every plan and act he brought to this one test. Whether here in the body pent or at home yonder in the Father's house, in whatever world he might be, he could conceive of no motive so lofty. And so this consuming passion of his soul he put on record, and sent it to the church, "We are ambitious to please Christ perfectly."

Notice that this is *an intelligent ambition*. It is based on a right estimate of values. The universe is essentially spiritual. The greatest realities cannot be measured in terms of the cash-drawer. Paul had prayed for himself as he prayed for the Philippians—that his love might abound more and more in advanced knowledge and keen perception, for testing things that differ; a delicate insight which would enable him to sense and choose what is vital. His word, translated "discernment," is that from which we derive our word "esthetics"—the science of the beautiful. His discriminating faculty was so illuminated and sensitized that he could recognize the true, the beautiful, and the good. Through the eyes of such clarified intelligence he saw that for

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the priceless privilege of knowing Christ, pleasing Christ, winning Christ, he could afford to suffer the loss of everything, and to reckon it all as mere refuse.

He also had a reasoned hope of achievement. He was not the kind who leap into vacancy and clutch at nothingness. He was confident that He who had begun a good work within him would go on to perfect it. While working out his salvation with reverence and trembling, he knew that the God who inspired his earliest impulse to please Christ was working mightily in him, and in fulfilment of his good-pleasure would enable him to achieve his desire.

In Southern France there was a poverty-stricken home containing an old willow chair, in which the head of the family, generation after generation, had been carried as a pauper to the almshouse. In that home was a lad born, as he afterward wrote, in a dim and dingy retreat, of mother lame and humpbacked sire. Frequent floggings varied the habitual starvation of his wayward and squalid infancy. At the age of ten he saw two cartmen carrying to the poorhouse his grandsire in that old armchair. One day,

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when he had grown a little older, he decided that he need not die in poverty. He took an ax and smashed that chair to splinters. In later years he declared that act to be the greatest act of his life. It liberated him from the tradition of recurrent poverty, expressed the conviction that the future could be different and better, made him, Jacques Jasmin, the father of modern Provençal song, and gave him a permanent place in the world of poetry. Smash the chairs that hinder you. Break your birth's invidious bar. By breasting the blows of circumstance, we may successfully grapple with an evil heredity. We can achieve.

This intelligent ambition is also *an adequate ambition*. It is based on knowledge—a knowledge which includes the whole sweep of life; not one period alone, or even one world; but all time and both worlds. "We know," the apostle affirms, as he surveys both the present and the future. He was not like Ingersoll, the arch-agnostic, who, when asked about a life beyond the skyline, flippantly replied: "I do not know. I have traveled very little, and that only in this world." We who are ambitious to

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please Christ have a religion not of negation, but of assurance. It has in it the accent of certainty. It is not hung on any such untwisted thread as "faintly trusting the larger hope." We do not pride ourselves, as some do, on stretching lame hands of faith and groping. We have something better than lame hands and faint hopes. We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God. *We* shall not be dissolved. Our mortal frame may suffer dissolution, but we shall not. By reason of our spiritual nature, we cannot be resolved without remainder into our relations with our environment. So a thoroughly modern man tells us—Dr. Rudolf Eucken, the distinguished professor of philosophy in the University of Jena. When all that is mortal in us has been dissolved, there will be a remainder. Our spiritual essence is imperishable. Its total destruction is impossible. We have inward kinship with the eternal; and so an ambition to be at all commensurate with us must hold in contemplation not only the life which now is, but also that which is to come.

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Just this the apostle does. When he foresees our mortality swallowed up of life, he is not thinking of escape from honest work, but of freedom from mortal limitations, that we may please Christ the better. To the ambitious Christian the universe has no lotus-eating realm of drowsy ease. He knows that the ideal world is not an idle world. He feels that God has no place for a lazy man here, and no good place for a lazy man hereafter. In that unfettered, unhindered, more abundant life for which the apostle yearned, God's servants not only see his face, but serve him. It is for this fuller life, of which our veins are scant, that we long when our soul in thoughtful mood shuts out the noise and traffic of the streets. And as an earnest that we shall find it, God gives us his Spirit—the pledge of fulfilled desire. It was this assurance that led Robert J. Burdette to say at nightfall: "My work is about done, I think. The best of it I have done poorly. Any of it I might have done better. But it is done. And in a fairer world with finer material and a better working light, I shall do better work."

Pleasing Christ *is the supreme ambition.*

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It towers above all other ambitions—social position, literary fame, political preferment, amassed fortune—as Jesus rises immeasurably above all the brightest and best of the sons of the morning. It is the ambition which in its spirit, aim, and duration, is the same as that which he cherished. He is the perfect pattern. The only being who ever came from the other world and lived our life, he knows the ambition which alone is worthy of an immortal. If therefore we can learn what his ambition was, we shall know what ours ought to be. And we can learn. For we have his own words. Listen to them: “I do always those things that please the Father.” As he went about doing good, he was the beloved Son in whom the Father was well pleased. Now read the words of the man who exhorts us to share his ambition: “We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor, aiming at a blessing calculated to build him up. For even Christ pleased not himself.”

Whatever our gift may be, whether testimony or song or teaching or finance or

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visitation, we may please Christ by ministering to others, even as he pleased the Father by thus ministering. We can hang pictures of cheer and hope in the silent gallery of at least one sunless life. We can be a music-maker in the weary path of at least one songless toiler. We can bind up at least one broken heart. We can pour the oil of comfort into at least one bruised spirit. We can throw a burst of sunshine into at least one darkened mind. We can extend a helping hand to at least one unfortunate brother. We can speak a word of salvation to at least one perishing soul. We can put the touch of a rosy sunset into the evening sky of at least one dying man or woman.

This supreme ambition is applicable to the most practical affairs. "Be ambitious," the apostle exhorts us, "to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, that ye may live honestly in relation to outsiders." That homely virtue, honesty, we must practise in any and every effort to please Christ. We must take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men. We must preserve a good conscience, desiring to live honestly in all things. Our high-

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est ideals and our daily occupations we must keep in healthy and constant contact.

President Benjamin Harrison, when a friend tried to induce him to enter a business transaction, apparently sound and safe, asked time for a few days' reflection; then said: "I cannot have anything to do with this. It may be all right. It seems legitimate. But it doesn't smell quite right." The man who would please Christ must avoid not only all obviously wrong transactions, but also every transaction with a questionable odor.

From these practical tests this supreme ambition lifts us to spiritual tasks. The man with a hoe only is a drudge. The man with a hope only is a dreamer. But the man whose hoe and hope are joined feels the passion of eternity. While at his toil he hears the Angelus and pauses to worship. This man who was ambitious to live honestly was also ambitious to preach the gospel where Christ had not been named. And how simply Jesus taught him to do it! He was here at Corinth, the city with its crested turrets, pillared fanes, and tower-capped citadel; the city with its groves of

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pine and flowers of every bloom, glowing in the whiteness of the noon and turned to amethyst at nightfall; the city with its two seas flecked with white sails from every land, the double tide that purpling rolled on either side; the city that looked toward Parnassus white and bare, glittering among the clouds, the mountain's forked peak, touched by the sun's first blaze, looking like twin spires of flame; the city sleeping beneath Helicon, from whose fountains Hesiod drank inspiration—sunset throwing its yellow veil round the blue summit, while night with her bough of cypress waved over the poet's leafy bed oblivion and holy dreams. It was here, amid these poetic surroundings, among this rhetoric-loving people, that the Master appeared and bade his servant speak. We might have expected a demand for an eloquent oration, or at least a formal, set discourse. But not so. The word translated "speak" means simply to "talk." Jesus wanted Paul not to ornament the gospel but to talk it. And that is what the world needs today—not more clergymen to expound the gospel, but more men and women to talk it, talk it everywhere.

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From practical tests, through spiritual tasks, this supreme ambition leads to sacrificial service. Paul told the Philippians that if he was required to pour out his life-blood as a libation over the faith-sacrifice which they were offering, he would rejoice and congratulate them, while they in turn must share his gladness, and congratulate him. Was it not this very spirit that possessed Doctor Barlow, of Shaohsing, China? That he might save the Chinese who were victims of a malignant fluke, whose nature he did not fully understand, he swallowed thirty-two of the parasites which he had taken from the body of a patient, boarded a vessel for America, and one day presented himself at Johns Hopkins University with his amazing story. Experts isolated the flukes, and subjected them to laboratory tests. The heroic doctor returned to his field, where after a series of experiments he located the disease in a land snail, which the people had been eating as freely as we eat oysters. He was willing to hazard his life to rescue others. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work"—that he tells us is his favorite scripture, and he adds: "No heaven for

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me with a harp and a crown. I want a heaven with some blueprints in it—something more to do.”

This suggests that pleasing Christ is a *continuous ambition*. Whether present or absent, at home or in exile, in the church militant or the church triumphant, it continues. Of all human emotions, we are told, ambition is the first to perish. This may be true of earth-born ambitions, but not true of this. It persists. It links us with the spiritual and the permanent. It mobilizes the forces of the soul, and heartens us to endure. It enables us to live now, as Jesus did, in heaven's border-land, so close to the frontier that we may be conscious of God, and above the mixed voices of earth may distinguish the voice of the Eternal.

It keeps us faithful to daily duty. Martin Brewer Anderson used to tell us students that scarcely ever in his life was he permitted to do what he wanted to do; but he kept everlastingly doing the duty that lay over against him. This faithfulness was due to the fact that every day he sought to renew in himself the perfect life of his

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Lord. Paul had long desired to see and evangelize Rome. He hid that hope in his heart, said Percy Ainsworth, but never tried to force the fulfilment of it in his life. He went right on pleasing Christ in the outlying provinces, until God's time came for him to visit the imperial city. Then he entered not as a preacher but as a prisoner. He had learned that one day well spent where Christ puts us is worth a whole millennium in the city of our dreams.

This ambition, regulative of our daily choices, helps us to eliminate inferior values. It makes some hitherto cherished things look like so much refuse. The familiar story of the Oxford student illustrates this. On his birthday his mother had given him a copy of Hoffman's painting of the boy Jesus talking with the doctors in the temple. His room was a typical student's room, nothing harmful in it, nothing very refining; just some cheap pictures slapped on the wall, some of which he had to take down so as to make a place for this birthday gift. As he gazed at that fine face with its great open eyes and look of purity, he removed the chromos one after another, till none re-

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mained. On one side of Christ he hung a beautiful sunset; and on the other, a peacefully flowing river. When his student friends a few days later, seeing the changed room, inquired the reason, he simply replied, "Those others did not seem to belong with Him." If you keep looking into that Face, your pastor will not need to preach against specific sins. They will disappear; and in their place will be many a golden and gorgeous sunset, with peace like a river. Your life will be beautified by a process of elimination.

By being continuously operative, this ambition holds us true to the highest ideals. It sanctions no sag. It ever holds before us the great white visions born of prayer and faith and love. This is what it did for Dannecker, the German sculptor. In his vigils one night he saw the Christ, and for eight years wrought until he had transferred to marble the Image which he carried in his soul. When Napoleon asked him to make a statue of Venus for the Louvre, he refused, saying: "A man who has seen Christ would commit sacrilege if he should employ his art in the carving of a pagan

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goddess; my art henceforth is a consecrated thing."

This ambition to please Christ—intelligent, adequate, supreme, and continuous—is finally a *prospectant ambition*; an ambition that looks forward to the judgment-seat of Christ; an ambition cherished in view of the day when we must all appear without disguise before his tribunal, to be requited for what we have done in the body, whether it be good or bad. There will be no loophole of escape for any of us. None will be overlooked in the crowd. Each of us must give account of himself. Surely he must be "afflicted with spiritual stupidity or cursed by incurable frivolity" who never gives serious thought to that other life into which any moment may usher us.

We are already made manifest unto God. All things are now naked and cleft open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. But in that divine event to which the whole creation moves, there will be a complete unveiling of character. Our inmost motives will be uncovered. In that day when the secrets of men shall be judged, there will be not only a revealing of our

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ambitions, but also a just recompensing of our deeds. How glad we shall then be if as we approach the judgment-seat we shall be sincerely conscious that during our earthly probation we had but one ambition—to please him who will judge us in righteousness.

Bishop Anderson, of Chicago, relates this impressive story. In a little Wisconsin town he met at the hotel a bright, enterprising, ambitious young salesman. The young man, who was inclined to be talkative, said to the Bishop one day, "I'm a traveling man." The Bishop replied, "So am I." The young man said, "I'm in the jewelry business." The Bishop replied, "So am I." For he thought of the scripture, "They shall be mine saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." The young man said, "My father has taken me into partnership with him." The Bishop replied, "So has mine." The young man said, "This is my first trip out." The Bishop replied, "I have made many trips." The young man said, "I'm working hard, for I'm anxious to make a good report when I get home." The Bishop replied,

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“So am I.” Oh, that was what Paul wanted—to be able to give a good report when he reached home. Is that your ambition and mine? If we honestly make it our aim to please Christ, and abide in him, then when he shall appear, we shall have confidence, and shall not be ashamed before him at his coming.

X

THE EVOLUTION OF A DESTINY

*The mind of the flesh is death, but the
mind of the spirit is life and peace.*

—Romans 8: 6.

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IN speaking of this chapter, Philip Jacob Spener, the distinguished seventeenth-century theologian, said, "If Holy Scripture was a ring, and the epistle to the Romans its precious stone, chapter eight would be the sparkling point of the jewel." It is the chapter that begins with no condemnation and ends with no separation; the chapter that records Christ's incarnation and explains his redemptive mission; the chapter that affirms our Lord's resurrection and promises ours; the chapter that describes the sons and heirs of God as those who are led by the Spirit of God; the chapter that counts our suffering as nothing in comparison with the coming glory, and in the light of God's deliberate purpose enables us to read the meaning of our tears; the chapter that prophesies our open recognition as sons through the deliverance of our bodies, and pictures the inanimate creation as gazing eagerly with outstretched neck in hope of being set free from the thralldom of decay;

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the chapter that tells us of our two Intercessors—one interceding at the Father's right hand, and the other within our hearts pleading for us in yearnings whose depth and agony baffle words; the chapter that gives us a love which makes us feel the rhythmic pulsing of immortal life, and from which no created thing can ever have power to separate us.

The text is a sentence which staggers under the weight of its own meaning. It is laden with an experiential and unchangeable truth. It discloses the links between one's nature and one's destiny. Are, aspire, walk. "Are after the flesh"; "mind the things of the flesh"; "walk according to the flesh." "Are after the spirit"; "mind the things of the spirit"; "walk according to the spirit." The carnal nature with its aspirations and conduct is bound in one dark bundle and labeled "death." Then with a pen dipped in sunshine the apostle writes "life and peace" upon the spiritual mind with its desires and activities. He shows that a man's state of being determines his tendencies, his conduct, and his goal. Since the unregenerate man is separated from God, which is death, his

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aspirations will be carnal, these will lead to a carnal life, and such a life will as certainly issue in endless death. The regenerated man, having his mind renewed by being brought into union with God, which is life, aspires after the higher spiritual values, and shapes his effort with a view to obtaining these ends. From man's state of being, therefore, his eternal destiny is unfolding. Spiritual death and spiritual life are developing within the souls of two classes of people; and this development will continue until the people in these two classes are brought either to that state in which not a trace of life remains, or to that perfect life from which the last vestige of death has disappeared.

The meaning of this momentous passage is clearly conveyed in Weymouth's translation:

If men are controlled by their earthly natures, they give their minds to earthly things. If they are controlled by their spiritual natures, they give their minds to spiritual things. Because for the mind to be given up to earthly things means death; but for it to be given up to spiritual things means life and peace. Abandonment to earthly things is a state of

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enmity to God. Such a mind does not submit to God's law, and indeed cannot do so. And those whose hearts are absorbed in earthly things cannot please God.

We have here two kinds of mind, which beget two kinds of aspiration; these produce two kinds of conduct; and these issue in two kinds of destiny.

The mind of the flesh and the mind of the spirit describe two inward but opposite moral states. The word translated "mind" is not the regular Greek term for "mind." To translate it thus is to emphasize too strongly the intellectual element. It means "minding" or "mindedness." It suggests the disposition, the thoughts and purposes, the entire inner attitude of the carnal and the spiritual man.

The mind of the flesh denotes the heart of the *wicked man*, like Judas, who pilfered from the apostolic treasury, and hanged himself after selling his Lord. The heart of the *selfish man*, like Felix, who in the hope of coining money out of Paul's chains, left him fettered in prison. The heart of the *moral man*, like Nicodemus, who, despite his clean character, his official position, and

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his friendliness toward Jesus, was assured that unless he was born anew he could not enter the kingdom of God. The heart of the *self-righteous man*, like the scribe and Pharisee, who washed clean the outside of the cup and dish, while within they were full of greed and self-indulgence. The heart of the *conceited man*, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind—inflated like a pair of bellows; like Walt Whitman who in his poetry celebrated the flesh, was haughtier in his plainness than many in their pride, and declared that he saw God in his own face in the glass. The heart of the *presumptuous man*, like Edgar Allan Poe, who was called the poet of the outcast soul, the echo of a lyre from behind the hills of death. He professed to feel that he was already damned; yet gambler and drunkard though he was, exclaimed, "My whole nature utterly revolts at the idea that there is any Being in the universe superior to myself."

The mind of the spirit is radically different. That expression describes the spiritual state of the man who has been made a new creation in Christ; the man who has been saved by the washing of regeneration

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and the renewal of his nature by the Holy Spirit. It is the mind of the man like Adoniram Judson Gordon, of whom his son Ernest wrote me, saying, "I think of him as the sweetest soul that ever looked through human eyes." The man like John Henry Jowett, whose piety, his biographer writes, was innate and central to his character. The man like Percy Clough Ainsworth, who found his joy in the deathless world of beautiful thoughts, and the loveliness of whose teaching, we are told, was the sincere and natural expression of his inner life. The man like Robert Murray McCheyne, whose heart was a perpetual hymn, and with whom "there seemed never a time when he was not himself feeling the presence of God." The man like the father of modern church history, Neander, who was known as a giant in intellect, a saint in piety, and a child in spirit.

From two such opposite kinds of mind there will of necessity arise two opposite kinds of aspiration. "They that are after the flesh," those who are controlled by their earthly natures, do mind—aspire after—the things of the flesh; but "they that are after

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the spirit," all who are controlled by their spiritual natures, do mind—aspire after—the things of the spirit.

Since, in one case, the carnal is a man's ruling principle, he will long for the things that gratify the carnal. Heart-buried in the world's rubbish, his passion for eternal is quenched. In sense dark-prisoned, his desire is wingless. If any man loves the world, John writes, he has no love in his heart for the Father, but is filled with the cravings of the flesh, the cravings of the eyes, the show and pride of life. He craves fleshly pleasures, and prodigal-like may even seek gratification among the swine-troughs. He does not seem to know that he ought to use his eyelids as well as his eyes, so as not to be enticed by the attractiveness of sin. He is moved by curiosity and covetousness. He is like the insect that Bates, the naturalist, found on the Amazon. Seeking sweetness, it lights on a brilliant spider spread out as a flower, and finds torment and death. He loves display in his style of living, and may be selfishly ambitious even in his acquisition of knowledge. As Browning makes Paracelsus say:

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I still must hoard and heap and class all truths
With one ulterior purpose: I must know!
Would God translate me to his throne, believe
That I should only listen to his word
To further my own aim!

Not so the Christian. He aspires after spiritual values. His desires are different because his nature has been changed. He has laid aside the old which belonged to his former mode of life, that nature which crumbles to ruin under the passions of moral deceit, and has been renewed in the temper of his mind, having clothed himself with that new and better self which has been created to resemble God in the righteousness and holiness of truth. He is energized by "the power whereby low lives aspire unto the doing of a selfless deed." His world is arched by the heavens. He looks upward as well as around. The church spire, pointing skyward, is typical of his aspirations. His mind is set on things above. He hungers and thirsts after righteousness, and has the assurance that he will be completely satisfied. He hungers for the living bread that came down from heaven, of which if any man eats he will

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live forever. His thirst for the living water leads him to the fountain of immortal drink. David declared that as the hart panted after the water-brooks, so panted his soul after God. Zinzendorf exclaimed: "I have but one passion; and it is He, only He." Doctor Northrup, president of the old theological seminary at Chicago, thinking himself alone one day, was overheard to cry, "Oh that I might be like God!"

It is inevitable that two such differing kinds of desire will produce two very divergent kinds of conduct. The cravings of the carnal man lead to a life of self-seeking. This is true whether as regards those who are living for the gratification of intellectual and esthetic tastes, or as regards the far greater majority of men who are laboring only for the food that perishes. Persons who thus live do not regard the teaching of Jesus that no one's life consists in the superabundance of his possessions. Neither do they heed the command of Paul, that they fix not their hopes on so uncertain a thing as riches; but being rich in noble deeds, open-handed and liberal, that they store up for themselves a solid foundation

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for the future, so as to lay hold of the life which is life indeed.

What a thought! A mortal man with an immortal soul! And yet an immortal being living as though this short pittance of time was his only immortality! An heir of eternity living as though his only heritage was this brief earthly period, which is but a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Our life here—it is only “a laugh and a tear, a hope and a fear, twixt cradle and bier.”

My brother, have you so far mistaken what it means to live—how vast a trust our earthly life is? Know you not that a soul which was made for God can never be satisfied with anything less than the infinite God himself? Satisfy the real longings of the heart by following after the things which gratify the flesh? It is mockery. Men of the world, who have their portion in this life, will find, when perhaps too late, that they have not really lived, but have been chasing pretty bubbles which burst when grasped, leaving in the hand only a damp spot of disappointment. It shall even be as when a hungry man dreams, and behold he

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eats; but he awakes, and his soul is empty; or as when a thirsty man dreams, and behold he drinks; but he awakes and behold he is faint, and his soul has appetite. In my university days I heard a profound Bible student say that there are four points of similarity between a dream and a life of sin: (1) Both are real in their seeming. (2) Both are absorbing in their interest. (3) Both are short in their duration. (4) Both are empty in their awaking.

In the good purpose of God, writes another, life is meant to be wholly beautiful, spiritually simplified, and always completely worth living. To such a life the aspiration of the Christian constantly tends. He no longer walks according to the flesh. Indwelt by the Holy Spirit, his general drift is toward holiness. Not that he has attained, or is already made perfect. No one so well as himself knows his failings and failures, his limitations and imperfections. But with his eyes fixed on the goal, he pushes on to secure the prize of God's heavenward call in Christ Jesus.

His passion to serve leads to a life like that of Russell Conwell, who through his

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unselfish service of others forgot himself into immortality. He laid himself upon the altar, and thereby kindled a burning sacrifice which yielded the odor of a sweet smell. Every day he tried to do two men's work—his own and that of John Ring, the Christian lad who once rebuked him for his unbelief, and who later at the battle of Newbern sacrificed his own life in rescuing the gold-sheathed sword of his beloved Colonel—the sword which the great preacher kept hanging over his bed when he was building Grace Temple, Temple University, and Samaritan Hospital, and which was placed in his hand when he at last lay cold in death. In the early days when his congregation was poorly housed, it was the longing for a new Sunday-school building on the part of little Hattie Wiatt, six years old, that led her to save her pennies until in her small red pocketbook she had fifty-seven cents! Then the Good Shepherd took her; the legacy was announced by Doctor Conwell as the people wept; and the members felt that the corner-stone of their great new church was already laid. Such lives are always worth living.

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The Christian knows also that, in the good purpose of God, life is meant to be wholly beautiful, that every act ought to disclose a beautiful soul. Henry Drummond proved that this is possible. His life was as radiant and fragrant as a fresh spring morning. At the risk of being accused of fond extravagance, his friends tell us that with a swing in his walk and a brightness on his face, he seemed to carry no cares, and to know neither presumption nor timidity; that wherever he went, he carried with him the air of health and victory. They speak of the ease and winsomeness of his piety; compare his visits to the alighting of a bird of paradise among them; and recall that when he left their presence, it was (as Longfellow sang of Evangeline) like the ceasing of exquisite music. If you were to cut a square inch out of any of Turner's skies, said Ruskin, you would find the infinite in it. So if you cut out a patch from the mind of the Christian, you will find it colored with the infinite, and his life is dyed with the color of his thoughts.

These two courses of conduct, which through two classes of aspiration grow out

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of two states of being, issue in two kinds of destiny—death and life. In this same letter Paul elsewhere twice emphasizes the same solemn truth. God will render to every man according to his work: to those who, by lives of persistent right-doing, are striving for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; while upon the self-willed who disobey the truth and obey unrighteousness will fall anger and fury, affliction and awful distress. (Rom. 2: 6-9.) When men are the bondservants of sin and not subject to righteousness, they reap from their conduct only a harvest of shame, and such things finally result in death; but when they have been set free from the tyranny of sin and have become the bondservants of God, they are rewarded in being made holy, and have eternal life as their final recompense. (Rom. 6: 20-22.)

Eternal death, then, is the destiny of the man who is carnally minded. The mind of the flesh—his unregenerate state—is already characterized by spiritual death, because he is separated from God who is the only source of spiritual life. His present surroundings may be pleasant, but they can-

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not impart life and peace. He is alienated from the living God who is the source of peace. A man with a fever is not made easy by the most comfortable bed. The fever is *within* him. God is at rest because he possesses inner harmony. Satan is always on the roam, because hell is inside him. He finds no rest, nor can he find rest, Milton tells us, because of the hot hell that always in him burns, though in mid-heaven.

The majority of unregenerate people find that their environment now corresponds to their inward unrest. They are like the man who tries to make his bed upon the top of a mast. They have set out on a troubled sea where no Christ is walking upon the waters. They may not belong to the grosser sort who are open enemies of the cross—men who mind earthly things, deify their appetite, and glory in their shame. But their nature has never been renewed. They are not motivated by the love of God, and so their good works are not acceptable to him. They are trying to justify themselves by the deeds of the law, and this no man can do. They have set their face and feet away from God, and the inevitable end is

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death. They are excavating an impassable gulf between themselves and the land of life, until through physical death they go down into the blackness of darkness forever. Our Saviour said (and let us read his words with tears), "These shall go away into eternal punishment."

Did you ever read the epitaph which Lord Byron wrote for one of his wasted years? It was this:

Here lies,
Interred in the eternity
Of the past,
From whence there is no
Resurrection
For the days, whatever there may be
For the dust,
The thirty-third year
Of an ill-spent life,
Which, after
A lingering disease of many months
Sank into lethargy,
And expired,
January 22nd, 1821, A. D.,
Leaving a successor
Inconsolable
For the very loss which
Occasioned its
Existence

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Now follow Spurgeon into the library of Trinity College, Cambridge, and with him scrutinize a statue of the man who could thus write of a dead year. The librarian said, "Stand here." Looking from that angle, the great preacher remarked: "What an intellectual face! What a grand genius he was!" Then the librarian led his visitor to the opposite side, saying, "Now look." Seeing a scowl and a leer such as befitted Satan when he thought it better to reign in hell than serve in heaven, Spurgeon exclaimed: "What a demon! That's the man who could defy God! Do you think the sculptor designed this?" "Yes," replied the librarian, "he meant to picture the superhuman genius that Byron possessed, and also the huge and hideous mass of sin that weighted his soul." That same marble told the story of his daring flights of fancy, and also of his wild and desperate excesses in his Venetian harem, as Macaulay called it. This is the libertine whose sensuality clouded and diseased his brilliance and wit and pathos, until sick in mind and body he poured out confession of disappointment and disillusion in the wail:

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I fly, like a bird of the air,
In search of a home and a rest,
A balm for the sickness of care,
A bliss for a bosom unblest.

He was already experiencing spiritual death; and when at the age of thirty-six he sank into his grave, the experience became fixed and final.

How different the goal of the Christian! To be spiritually minded is life and peace. In the term "life" are summed up all the blessings of salvation. "Peace" is mentioned in order to emphasize one particular element of eternal life. Life and peace characterize the believer's present state, because he is united to Christ who came that we might have the more abundant life and who bequeathed to us his peace as a permanent legacy. Godliness has promise of today as well as tomorrow. The man who has tasted the blessedness of the spiritual mind would not go back to the beggarly elements of the world, even if he knew that all the fountains of heaven were dried up and all the fires of hell were quenched. But far more blessed will be his lot, when Christ calls him home. Of that heavenly

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life and peace he occasionally has foretastes and foregleams, like Gladstone, the man "who never sold the truth to serve the hour." His last days at Hawarden were days of perfect peace; and when his friends left his room they felt that they had been on the Mount of Transfiguration, and had caught a glimpse of Paradise through the gates ajar. When those gates swing inward and the abundant entrance is granted, our faith will be turned into sight and our hope into fruition. So shall we ever be with the Lord, to see his face and to serve him.

As a girl Ann Hasseltine Judson was beautiful, ardent, restless, but so reckless in her gaiety that many predicted for her an early death. One Sunday morning, at the age of sixteen, she accidentally took up a book on female education, and the first words that caught her eye were, "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." Amazed at that scripture, she was inclined to think that some invisible power had directed her attention. After a struggle of several months, she obtained a new heart, passed from death to life, found the sacred Scriptures sweet to her taste, felt her heart

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drawn out in love to all Christians, and besought God to do with her what seemed good in his sight. He sent her as the first woman missionary from America to the heathen, "an illuminated initial letter on the page of missionary history." When her heart was renewed, her aspirations were changed; these led to conduct which has placed her among the noblest women that ever bore the Christian name; and her destiny was not the lonely hopia-tree of Amherst, but the Tree of Life in the garden of her God.

Since every man bears the star of destiny in his own breast, the only way to change your destiny, if you are not a Christian, is to let God change your mind of flesh to the mind of the spirit, and so the carnal aspiration to the spiritual, the ungodly course of action to the godly. Then the end will not be hopeless death, but life and peace everlasting.

XI

ON THE FIELD WHERE ANGELS
SANG

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

—Luke 2: 8-20.

ON THE FIELD WHERE ANGELS SANG

The story of the shepherds and the angels and the Christ-Child never grows old. One memorable day I started for the scenes of the first Christmas. It was only five miles south from Jerusalem to Bethlehem. On the road I met a picturesque train of laden camels, such as may have conveyed the Wise Men in the days of Jesus. Passing a large white tomb, where it is supposed that Rachel died and was buried in the way, I saw straight ahead, perched on the crest of a long ridge, a small city built of limestone, with flat roofs, the slopes of the ridge dotted with olive trees and terraced with vineyards, while here and there patches of pulse and field lilies, tulips and poppies, lighted the landscape with a blaze of scarlet and yellow, purple and white.

To the east lay the fields, where Ruth gleaned in the barley harvest, and where later the shepherds were keeping watch over their flocks by night. The skies that bent

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above me were those that once glowed with a supernatural splendor when the angel choir struck all their harps of gold. Built over the cave, which held the manger, stood the Church of the Nativity, perhaps the oldest Christian church in the world. Between monolithic pillars of reddish limestone veined with white, I walked from the entrance to a stairway leading down into a rock cavern, forty feet long, twelve feet wide, and ten feet high. There at the cradle of the world's hope, I kneeled by a silver star sunk in the stone floor, where I read a Latin inscription, "Here of the Virgin Mary Jesus Christ was born."

Then in memory the centuries came thronging back, and I recalled that in the fulness of time there was a strange convergence of two worlds toward that little city. Far away in the east, certain students of astronomy saw a new star, betokening the advent of a new king. Loading their camels with gold and frankincense and myrrh, these Magi (whose names according to tradition were Melchior, Caspar, and Balthasar) began to follow the stellar messenger. About the same time, a husband

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with his wife was leaving his humble home in Galilee for the same destination—the Wise Men attracted by the star, Joseph and Mary driven by an imperial decree. Before starting from Nazareth, Mary had been visited by an angel, who assured her of a child that should save his people from their sins, and of whose kingdom there should be no end. At the close of a three days' journey, the travel-worn man and woman climbed at nightfall into crowded Bethlehem. Finding no room in the inn, they sought shelter in a stable. In the upland pastures near-by lay some shepherds, "nursed in devout and lonely thought," keeping watch over the Temple flocks. As the silence of the night deepened, another world was witnessing stranger sights than a stabled family, a group of shepherds, and a gleaming star. Behind the curtain that veiled the spirit-realm, angels were preparing to sweep down the highway of stars and herald the birth of the long-expected Saviour. Suddenly the clock of the centuries struck the appointed hour. A dazzling effulgence such as never had illumined the Bethlehem hills enswathed the shepherds.

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In their terror an angel, the one "mid bright ones doubly bright," appeared with a message which must have fallen like a sweet benediction on their quaking hearts: "Fear not; I bring you good tidings; there is born unto you this day a Saviour." And then a multitude of the heavenly host caught up the strain, singing the sublimest of all Christmas carols, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

The music ceased, the angels disappeared, and the unwonted radiance faded into the light of common day. But the anthem of glory and peace and good-will which the angels sang that night has never died from human hearts, and the gospel of great joy which the angelic evangelist brought is still charming and gladdening all peoples.

The angels brought more than tidings of joy. Theirs was good tidings of great joy. And this was the tidings, that Christ was born. That meant God and man united. That meant manhood redeemed. No wonder the heavenly multitude sang a new song. "Glory to God in the highest" was an old hymn. They had sung that at the creation.

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Now they beheld their Creator partaking of flesh and blood, that in all things he might be made like unto us; and they added this new strain, "on earth peace, good-will toward men." No wonder the shepherds published the saying that was told them. This child was a Saviour! No wonder they hastened from the fields to the manger, and thence returned, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen. They had heard angelic choirs. They had seen the incarnate Lord.

One day just before Christmas, Spurgeon was very heavy in spirit. London's atmosphere had greatly depressed him. He felt that no lark could pipe to skies so dull and gray. But a thought struck him, and filled him with gladness. It was this, that the joy of Christ's birth belongs to those who tell it, for the angels who spoke to men were exceedingly glad. He thought of this, and whispered to his own heart, "As I shall repeat the story, I will take the license to rejoice myself, rejoice if for nothing else than that I have such a message to tell." Next morning as he stood before a vast throng and discoursed on the Great Birth-

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day, he exclaimed: "Oh, joy, joy, joy! There was born into this world a man who was also God." Let us tell the story as gladly as did the angels. Having seen him in his glory and now in his humiliation, they could not express themselves in dull prose. Their speech all flowed to music. It is a message worthy of praiseful and perpetual repetition. Let us publish it as joyfully as did the shepherds. They first got their ears open—they listened to the angels' song. Then they got their eyes open—they saw the babe in the manger. Then they got their mouths open—they trumpeted abroad the good news.

This evangel of great joy was first given to shepherds, a few simple-minded men, engaged in a very humble calling. The annunciation to these lowly watchers was entirely consonant with our Lord's whole earthly career. He was born not in a palace, but in a stable. No crown bedecked his forehead fair. No wardrobe of purple or fine linen awaited his advent. And yet the swathing bands of peasants could not conceal his royalty. Hallowing childhood he then ennobled honest toil. Socrates

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taught that the hand hardened by toil was marked by disgrace. Cicero declared that the work-shop could contain nothing befitting a gentleman. The Son of man wrought at the carpenter's bench, and yet is recognized as "the first true gentleman that ever breathed." He associated with fishermen, and was heard gladly by the common people. He had no place to lay his head either in life or death. The cross had no pillow, and he was buried in a borrowed grave. He was no aristocratic Christ. He came to preach good tidings to the poor, and to set at liberty them that are bruised.

The shepherds were about their ordinary work. They were in the place of duty; and while there they heard the angels sing. Heaven is always near the dutiful. The peril of this age is that men will not leave the sheep long enough to investigate the Christmas message. They will not quit their business long enough to test by experience the truth of the incarnation. They are like the woman of whom the Russian legend tells. According to this, the three Wise Men, on their way from the East, found a humble dwelling where she was engaged in

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her household duties. They tried to persuade her to accompany them in their quest of the King. She pleaded her work as an excuse for delay, promising, however, to follow them later. But alas! when her work was finished, not only had the Magi disappeared, but the guiding star had faded from her sight. Let not the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the lust of other things prevent a visit to the manger. Come near, and kneel, and worship him who was born unto you a Saviour. Open your treasures, and offer to him your gifts. The star again appears for you, and hangs trembling over his birth-place. The angels again descend and sing their cradle-hymn of peace and good-will to you. Like the shepherds say, "I will go now and see this thing that has come to pass," and tomorrow you will return to your work, glorifying and praising God.

The song of the angels dissipates fear. Its first command is "Fear not." Its keynote is "great joy." The shepherds were sore afraid when the glory of the Lord shone round them. The mysterious sighing of the night winds, the blood-curdling cry

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of the jackals, the creeping shadows that made the pastures a valley of death-shade, had no terrors for these men. But the sky afire with God made them tremble. They did not love darkness, but they feared such light. From time immemorial there seems to have been a conviction that any supernatural manifestation is to be dreaded, that it forebodes some ill. When, therefore, the herald angel, instead of unsheathing a sword bathed in heaven, let fall the comforting command "Cease to be afraid," it sounded like the dropping of sweet-smelling myrrh. "I bring you good tidings," he said; "the days of fear are over; the morning of joy has dawned; this the sign to you—a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes." They could not be afraid of a babe; and going with haste, they found the child, and their fear was changed to praise.

Fear hath torment. Some Christians look as if they were tormented. Their faces are solemn. Their speech is funereal. The Christmas angels have a message for you. A Saviour is born! God in human form is the end of fear. Since we are sharers in flesh and blood, he himself participated

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in our nature, that through death he might deliver us who through fear of death have been subject to life-long slavery. Look into the manger, and behold the evidence of his love manward. Let his perfect love cast out fear. Listen to the angels sing, and bury your tormenting fear in that shroud of harmony.

The first Christmas morning did more than dissipate fear. It brought salvation. "There is born to you this day," the angel declared, "a Saviour who is Christ the Lord." Russell Sage told us that thrift would save the world. Materialism rotted the Roman world. There is no salvation by character. The attempt to save men by culture ended in starless night. Philosophy and ethics sank back into despair, crying with Plato, "We will wait for a divine man." The Divine Man came. It was not thrift or culture or philosophy or ethics that the shepherds found in the manger. It was God become flesh. It was Jesus, who saves his people from their sins. And there is no salvation in any other.

He is here called Christ, the anointed one. He was anointed as prophet, to inter-

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pret to us the mind and heart of God. He was anointed as priest, to offer one sacrifice for sins forever. He was anointed as king, that he might occupy the throne-room of our life, and bring into blissful subjection our every thought and act. Being prophet, priest, and king, he is the perfect Saviour, who brings a perfect salvation. He is able to save to the uttermost, unto every completeness, those who come to God through him. On his natal day, when the angels sang, God came into humanity. Now humanity is in the Godhead—is there in the person of our Christ, “who suffered our temptations, experienced the hot pulse of our pain, sighed with the feeling of our sorrow, wept by a mortal grave, and at last felt upon his brow the night-dew of death.” Is not this a gospel of great joy?

This perfect salvation is offered to all. The good tidings were for all the people. Good tidings to shepherds, engaged in their lowly toil; to the heavy-laden, with their restless hearts and their sweat-beaded brows; to the herd of narrow foreheads, who (the scribes declared) were accursed because they knew not the law. Good tid-

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ings to Joseph, the rich councilor; to Nicodemus, the learned Sanhedrist; to Zacchæus, the chief publican. Good tidings of great joy to Matthew, sitting at his toll-booth; to Peter, mending his broken nets; to Bartimæus, his eyes rolling in irksome night. Good tidings to the widow of Nain, looking through the blinding veil of her grief; to Jairus, when his only daughter lay a dying; to Mary and Martha, listening to the voice of life calling their brother from the grave. He is the accessible Christ. He was so at his birth. No royal guards pushed back the shepherds and the Magi from the stable door. He was so during his life. The hem of his garment was ever trailing where the needy might touch it. He was so in his death. On the cruel tree, his hands, extended wide as mercy's span, pointed his messengers to the uttermost part of the earth.

Mark well, however, that while the good tidings are unto all, the great joy becomes the possession of only such as believe. Christ's salvation is limited to believers. This natal day, which has transformed the life of the world, may pass and leave in

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you no increment of faith, no deposit of spiritual blessing. The shepherds saw and believed; but the Bethlehemites went unconcernedly about their work next morning as if nothing unusual had occurred. The Magi, seeing the star over his cradle, rejoiced with exceeding great joy; but Herod was troubled by the tidings of a new-born king. We have our hope, Paul says, set on the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of them that believe. This, then, is the practical question today. Do *you* believe? Is Jesus born unto *you*? Can you say with the Virgin-mother, "My spirit hath rejoiced in God *my* Saviour"? If so, you may strike the loud cymbals of delight. If not, this joyous anniversary can mean little more to you than the hanging of a few holly wreaths, the trimming of a few ever-green trees, the eating of a few extra dishes, and the exchanging of a few perishable presents. Make the story true to yourself by experience. In your investigation of the nativity, go to the right place. The shepherds went to Bethlehem and were enlightened. Herod sent to Jerusalem, and was mystified. You cannot find in the

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natural an explanation of the supernatural.
Receive Christ with adoring faith, and sing
with Tennyson,

Thou and peace to earth were born,
Good-will to *me* as well as all.

Do you recall Ralph Connor's Christmas eve in a lumber-camp? The lumbermen in their crude dining-shack had eaten a turkey-dinner that loaded the long tables. In a wide circle they had disposed themselves about the fire, which roared and crackled up a huge chimney. Lachlan Campbell, the melancholy Highlander, had finished on his violin that most plaintive of all Scottish melodies, "Lochaber No More." Craig, the sky-pilot, had played "The Sweet By and By," the men singing it with throats full open. Then the minister drew from his pocket a little Bible, and read this old, old story of the angels, the shepherds, and the Babe. He told of his home years ago—how he listened to his mother as she made him hear the sheep bleating, and see the frightened shepherds and even the sudden burst of glory that caused his boyish heart to jump. It was all so real and beautiful.

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Then one Christmas eve there was no one to tell him the story, and he soon forgot it. He went away to college and there learned to think it was only a child's tale. With mother and mother's Christ gone, bad days and worse days came, until he lost his grip on self and goodness and hope. One black Christmas, when he had given up all, he entered a mission meeting in a far-away city, where with a bitter ache in his heart he heard the story once more, and found himself peeking under the shepherds' arms at the Baby in the straw. "Then," he said with a quick glow in his face and a little break in his voice, "it came over me like great waves, that his name was called Jesus, because he should save men from their sins. I held to that hope with all my soul, and he hasn't failed me yet; not once, not once. O boys, why don't you give him a chance at you?"

That is my plea today. Perhaps you have forgotten the eager delight with which you listened to your mother at the Christmas-tide. It may be that you have come to regard the story as only a beautiful myth woven out of old-world fancies. Peek under

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the shepherds' arms at the Babe in the straw. He is the Saviour! Cling to that faith with all your soul. He will not fail you, not once. Will you give him a chance at you?

XII

THE CHRISTMAS STAR

We have seen his star in the east.

—Matthew 2: 2.

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Two ways lead to the manger—the way of revelation and the way of investigation. God led the shepherds by a song; the Magi, by a star. The song would not suffice for the Magi, nor the star for the shepherds. The two groups differed in environment and mental furnishing. The shepherds were reared in the atmosphere of Jewish prophecy. They were keeping watch over flocks intended for the Temple sacrifices. God could reveal himself to these men by his angel and the heavenly choir, and in the light of that revelation they could find their way to the manger-cradle. But the priest-sages, versed in astrology and sharers in the vague expectancy of a coming world-ruler, must approach the manger by another road. In their search they mixed their brains with the star and such information as Jewish exiles had given from their Scriptures. They, like the shepherds, have left us their “patterain,” as gypsies call the bunches of grass or wild flowers which they sprinkle

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at the parting of the ways, to show their friends who follow what trail to take. At the cross-roads of the years the shepherds have left us their patterain of revelation; and the Magi, their patterain of investigation. It matters little which path we pursue, just so we arrive.

Three explanations of the star have been offered. (1) It was miraculous. Matthew Henry called it "a candle set up on purpose to guide the Magi to Christ." (2) It was natural. Astronomers agree that two years before our Lord's birth Jupiter and Saturn came into conjunction, producing a most brilliant spectacle in the night-skies of May, October, and December. One year later Mars joined the conjunction. In 1603 Kepler observed that when these three planets approached each other, "a new extraordinarily brilliant and peculiarly colored evanescent star" was visible between the first two, and he suggested that a similar phenomenon may have occurred just prior to the Nativity. But this suggestion of an evanescent sidereal body at the first Christmas is a mere assumption; and as for Jupiter and Saturn we know that they were

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never nearer each other than one degree, which would make their light-diameter look double that of our moon. Besides, the word translated "star" is not that for a constellation, but for a single luminary. (3) It was mythical—a creation of the religious imagination. This is the view of the modernist, who objects to the supernatural. With him a miracle is a hero-story which has grown up around the character of a revered man; or an exaggerated account of something that actually happened; or an actual happening which could be explained by natural laws if they had been understood at the time.

Only the first explanation satisfies the New Testament account. The star not only led the Magi on, but stopped right over the spot where the Child lay. Surely we are justified in believing that the God who in the creative dawn went forth scattering worlds in his pathway would hang out a new light at the birth of his Son. It was the greatest event since the creation. And assuredly he who created the myriad orbs that cohere and spin on their measureless ways, could light one more candle; or out

of boundless space where the great suns already awakened and shone, could bring within range of human vision one additional star. The greater miracle was not the star but the Child. When we see miracles not through natural law but through his unique personality, the miraculous elements of his life, including his virgin birth and bodily resurrection, become not only possible, but also probable and credible.

The Christmas Star is *The Star of Prophecy*. When I asked a theological professor what value he attached to prophecy as evidencing the Messiahship of Jesus, he replied, "None whatever." For me it is difficult to understand how any Biblical student can fail to discern that through the variety and complexity of the many books there runs a Messianic strain of prediction and fulfilment which is complete and convincing. In the story of the Star we find a fulfilling of prophetic utterances concerning our Lord's natal city, his virgin birth, and his office as shepherd-king.

"Thou Bethlehem Ephratha," wrote Micah, "which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one

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come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel " (Micah 5: 2). Moved with malignant jealousy, Herod, that inhuman compound of mud and blood, inquired of the priests and scribes where the Christ, his rival king, was to be born. They replied: " In Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, land of Judah, art in no wise least among the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come forth a governor, who shall shepherd my people Israel " (Matthew 2: 6).

Prophecy is the mold of history. This dictum holds good here, where even the details of our Lord's birth are run in the prophetic mold. " Behold," exclaimed Isaiah, " a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel " (Isaiah 7: 14). With this compare the New Testament record: " Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel, which is, being interpreted, God with us " (Matthew 1: 22, 23).

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There are those who deny that Isaiah was referring either to Jesus or his mother. They tell us that the Hebrew word *almah*, translated "virgin," means a marriageable woman; and that the promised son was to be merely a boy whose name would symbolize the great deliverance which God had given Judah. But the fact is that *almah* in the Old Testament commonly signifies an unmarried woman, and there is no trace of its being used in any other sense. Luther offered to give 100 florins (though he said God alone knew where he would get the money) if either Jew or Christian could prove to him that in any passage of Scripture the word ever means a married woman. From the New Testament we learn that the prophets did not always understand the full content of their prophecies (1 Peter 1:11); and I for one prefer the interpretation given by the inspired evangelist to any given by an uninspired critic. The learned Dr. James Orr says that Matthew, looking back upon Isaiah's prophecy with the facts before him, rightly saw its Messianic import; and seeing in the prophecy God's guarantee for the perpetuity of the

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house of David, was entirely justified in the use he made of the prophetic passage. Out of his ripe scholarship Dr. John Albert Broadus wrote:

We, who might never have perceived such a reference in the prophet's words, accept it on the authority of the Evangelist, and do so without difficulty, because we see how fully the prophetic books are pervaded by the Messianic idea. To him all the prophets bear witness.

Rejecting the Messianic reference in Isaiah, Dr. Charles Edward Jefferson nevertheless firmly believes in the virgin birth. That belief he bases on the holiness and power of Christ, holding that the virgin life of Jesus makes it possible to believe in his virgin birth. Nor need we, Doctor Jefferson thinks, discard the doctrine because of anything that science or historical scholarship has discovered. He declares:

My confidence in the historicity of the miraculous birth of our Lord has never been shaken by anything that I have heard or by anything I have ever read. I have read thousands of pages on the subject, but have never yet found an argument to weaken my belief.

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A distinguished biologist recently came to me with a written statement of his faith. The first paragraph read:

I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the divine Son of God. Through him and him alone I find access to the Father. I gladly accept him as my personal Saviour, and am earnestly trying to follow him as my Lord. My greatest desire is to make room in my soul for his living Spirit, and to work out in the world his ideals of righteousness, love, sacrifice, and unselfish service.

When I had finished reading this paragraph, the following conversation took place. He asked, "What do you think of me?" I replied, "You are a Christian." "I am an evolutionist." "I do not care what you *call* yourself, so long as you *believe* what you say concerning my Lord. By evolution I presume you mean God's method of procedure." "Just so." "Do you believe that God could break into the evolutionary process at any point along the way?" "Certainly. I can remove the works of my watch, make changes in them, and put them back into the case again. God can surely do as much." Then I put the question: "Professor, do you believe in the virgin

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birth?" "Yes." "Why?" "For two reasons: I find it in the New Testament; and in my scientific investigations I see nothing to militate against it. On the contrary, I am constantly finding evidence of virgin birth in the lower creation." He seems to have combined the way of the shepherds (revelation) with the way of the Magi (investigation). I myself am not an evolutionist, but I am confident that this man has arrived at the manger. The Messiah who was prophesied to rule as the Shepherd-King is governing the professor's conduct and shepherding his life. He has enthroned Jesus in his heart. Nor can we have Christ as our Saviour unless we confess him as our Lord. He will not shepherd our life unless we obey him as our King.

The Christmas Star is *The Star of Kingship*. The Magi inquired concerning the Child who was born King, saying that they had seen his star in the east, and had come to worship him. Perhaps they meant nothing more than to offer such homage as was due to royalty; but they purposed to do the best they could with the light they had.

As King he merits our worship. We are

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wiser than these Wise Men. We know that he is Deity incarnate, and that the test of a Christian is the worship of him as God. What an example Queen Victoria set us in the closing festivities of her coronation! Handel's "Messiah" was being rendered. She heard the contralto sing, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son"; then the festival choir, "Unto us a child is born, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace"; again the contralto, "He was despised and rejected of men." When the singers reached the Hallelujah Chorus, the audience arose. The young queen had been instructed by the court ladies that it would be undignified for her to stand when the people stood. So she remained seated. Then the bass sang, "He shall reign forever and forever"; then the tenor sang it, and the alto, and the soprano, then the great choir lifted to heaven the strain, "King of kings and Lord of lords"; then all the mighty chorus united in the grand "Hallelujah." Victoria, rising, removed her crown, which she well knew symbolized only a limited and passing authority;

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and bowing her head, reverently said, "I bow in homage to Jesus Christ."

As a King he expects our gifts. The Magi knew that presents were customary when approaching royalty. So when they came into the house and saw the young Child with Mary his mother, they fell down and worshiped him; and opening their treasure-chests, they offered gifts to him—gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

You recall Ebenezer Scrooge. Dickens says that he was a squeezing, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shriveled his cheek; stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his lips blue, and his voice grating. A frosty rime was on his head, his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He carried his own low temperature always with him; iced his office in the dog-days; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas. Like his partner, Jacob Marley, he walked through crowds of fellow beings with his eyes turned down,

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never once raising them to the blessed Star which led the Wise Men to a poor abode. But finally, in a kind of waking dream, the Spirit of Christmas Past began to warm his frigid heart by reviving memories of his boyhood days; and the Spirit of Christmas Present continued the thawing process by showing him the happiness of making others happy; and the Spirit of Christmas Future completed his transformation by leading him to his own neglected grave and letting him see how unwept he would be if he died in his selfishness. It was then that he uttered his memorable resolve: "I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year." With the Christmas urge upon us we ought to live our life every day, bringing to Christ through our service of others some gift from our treasure-chests of love—a bit of gold, or frankincense, or myrrh.

As a King he demands our loyalty. This is fundamental. Out of this virtue grows a life that is radically and radiantly Christian. No divided allegiance will be tolerated. Either for him or against him—that is his view. "Only one King, only one

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King," exclaimed a Hungarian, as he excitedly and vigorously pointed upward. I had asked him how he felt about his five brothers who had been forced by the Emperor into the Austro-Hungarian army. Jesus is the blessed and only sovereign, and he will brook no rivals for our affection, or our service, or our worship. Nor will he suffer any altering of his claims. As regards himself, interpretation and imitation are in order, but no modification.

At the time of the World War, when a service star hung in the windows of a million American homes, a boy and his father were walking home one night. Only a single star was visible. The father remarked that God had hung one star in the window of heaven; to which the boy replied, "Then he must have a Son in the service." The star that gleamed in Bethlehem's sky marked a home whose Son had offered himself for the life and liberty of the world. In the incarnation he tasted the bitter cup of his passion and the holy pain of his cross; and for this God made him both Lord and Christ. Give him the throne-room of your hearts.

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The Christmas Star is *The Star of Gladness*. Just when the Magi lost all trace of the star we do not know. They evidently saw nothing of it while in Jerusalem. But on the way through the open country once more, they caught sight of it, and were intensely glad.

What a joyless, cheerless world this would be without the Christmas Star! No happy, expectant children. No mysterious packages gleefully hidden. No suspended stockings awaiting the advent of a loving giver. No little dreamer wearing the smile of an angel in expectation of the glad tomorrow. No Christmas tree with its lights and gifts, its laughter and its love. And for us who are older, no hallowed memories of childhood, when with the snow falling in silence father and mother wove the holly around the hearth, and calmly fell our Christmas eve. No churches with their alluring carols. No hymns about the herald angels. No gladdening bells pealing out their merry wishes. No friendly carolers singing beneath the lighted windows and gathering gifts for Christ's poor. No training of our youth in the spirit of him who

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was cradled in Bethlehem's manger. No educational or charitable or missionary institutions such as through his coming have blessed mankind. No peace on earth or good-will toward men like that which his teaching is promoting everywhere. Before his birth, the mightiest of all nations held that every man was a wolf to every other man whom he did not know. A world without a Christmas Star? No power to change men from tight-fisted, grasping, selfish misers into apostles of love with a passion to honor giving in their hearts and practise it all the year. No assurance for us beyond the sky-line, but at the end of life's road only a mystery as dark and dismal and dread as could be woven out of ignorance and superstition and guilt. Thank God there is a Christmas Star. Joy to the world! The Lord is come. Receive him as your King. Rejoice, and again I say, Rejoice. Lift up your heart and sing. Come to the manger-cradle today, and be glad in the love of the Father who gave us the Christmas Child.

The Star that made the Magi glad awakened desire, supplied light, and furnished

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guidance. The light would have availed nothing, without the desire to see the King, nor would it have led to Christ had not its beckoning been followed. Astronomy, the only science born of the soul, arose out of men's groping after God, if haply they might find him. The radiant inverted bowl we call the sky awed them with the consciousness of a Creator, and they longed either that they might come even to his seat, or that he would rend the heavens and descend. In lands near and far the Jews had spread the expectation of an epoch-making birth; and these priest-sages, seeing the unusual star, started on their memorable quest.

Whenever I see a picture of these seekers urging their camels toward the Star, the Russian legend of Babouscka comes to mind. She lived in a little hut, at some cross-roads, in the coldest corner of far-away Russia. She was crooked and wrinkled and poor. Late one snowy afternoon while sweeping her floor, she saw a caravan coming down one of the lonesome ways—three camel-mounted kings followed by a retinue of servants. The kings wore glittering crowns and great fur coats. Melchior, an

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old man with white hair and flowing beard, held a richly woven bag heavy with gold. Gaspar, a beardless youth with ruddy face, had in his hand a stone vase which emitted a perfume like incense. And Balthasar, swarthy and thick-bearded, carried a transparent jar filled with a golden liquid whose color was that of myrrh. They told Babouscka that they had seen a Star betokening the birth of a royal Child, and that they were following it to the town where he lay. They besought her to show them the route as far as she knew it—indeed to accompany them on the pilgrimage. But night was falling, her hut was cozy, and she pleaded her unfinished work as an excuse for declining. Perhaps she might start in the morning. By sunrise she had begun to sense her lost chance; but when she looked for the caravan, it had disappeared, and the snow had covered the tracks of the camels' feet. Day and night she brooded over her loss, until one day she left her desolate hut and started in search of the Child. In her apron she carried some candy and cheap toys that she might make friends with little children. From everybody she met she in-

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quired the way to the manger. She never entered a home except on Christmas eve. Then she would slip quietly into the nursery, whispering, "Is the young Child here?" She would peep into every cradle, drop a tear on the baby's pillow, and turn away disappointed. She is still hobbling along on a crutch, seeking the Vision that she lost two thousand years ago. If I had the wisdom of the aged Melchior, the enthusiasm of the youthful Gaspar, and the power of the swarthy Balthasar, I would combine them all in my appeal to you, Seek the Christ now, if you have never found him.

The Christmas Star is *The Star of Trouble*. This is the one harsh note in the Messianic symphony. It mars the harmony of the angels' song. It is the one blotch in the picture of the Nativity. It is as black as could be painted from colors mixed in hell. It is not pleasant to contemplate, but it cannot be avoided. There was one dark face, suspicious and malicious, thrust in among the shepherds and the Magi. In the Christmas drama there was one villain—Herod the Great. He was great in ability, in achievements, in wickedness. Like Mil-

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ton's Satan, he was by merit raised to that bad eminence. When the Wise Men came to his capital, asking about a new-born king, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. No wonder the people were agitated and apprehensive. They knew him, and because of this knowledge dreaded some new explosion of fiendish passion.

He was jealous, and hypocritical, and murderous. Being an Idumean, appointed king of Judea by the Roman Senate, he was cordially hated by the Jews. The sinister intrigues for his throne kept him constantly uneasy; and when the Wise Men announced a royal birth, his jealousy was hotly aroused. Hoary hypocrite that he was, he professed a desire to worship the Christ-Child, when he meant to kill the Son of God! Made furious by the failure of the Magi to bring him word from Bethlehem, he thought to make sure of his murderous purpose by massacring all the boys under two years of age in that neighborhood, thereby causing a cry to be heard in Ramah, wailing and bitter lamentation.

This Slaughter of the Innocents is apiece with all we know of him from secular his-

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tory. His hands ever smelled of blood. His uncle Joseph he executed without a hearing. He drowned Aristobulus, his brother-in-law, who held the office of high priest. His wife, Mariamne, the tall and beautiful Maccabean princess, the only being he ever loved, he beheaded; and then tortured by remorse, called her name day and night. Alexandra, his mother-in-law, he murdered as a plotter. With the strangler's rope he killed his two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, at Samaria where thirty years before he had married their mother, causing Augustus to assert that he would rather be Herod's hog than his son. Five days before his death he signed an order to butcher Antipater, his son by Doris, his cast-off wife. That he might compel the shedding of tears when he died, he clapt up in the hippodrome at Jericho all the heads of the leading Judean families, with the strict injunction that they be slaughtered the instant breath left his body. And thus dying with a loathsome disease, strangling in his own blood, and crying out for yet more massacres, his miserable soul passed into the blackness of darkness. What a terrible thing to die

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without hope and without God, when he whose Star the Magi saw was named Immanuel, God with us, and Jesus, the Saviour of his people from their sins!

The Christmas Star is *The Star of Hope*. Poets sing of hope as the star on life's tremulous sea, and of the hopeless man as one who never sees the stars shine through his cypress trees. The Star in the east illumined the cradle of humanity's hope, and heralded the revealing of the Father, the founding of the church, the charting of the world, and the unveiling of the future.

This hope which the Star has caused to spring eternal in our breast is universal, unfailing, and personal. In the temple Simeon took the infant Redeemer in his arms, and called him a light for the Gentiles and the glory of Israel. Since that happy day the nations have thronged his altars, and prostrate kings have presented their gifts. Nor has the brightness of his rising ever been totally eclipsed. In the darkest hour his worshipers have always been able to see a shaft of light in the east. They have known that a brighter morning would dawn. Even Abraham exulted in

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the hope of seeing the dayspring from on high, and therefore under utterly hopeless circumstances hopefully believed. So, Paul tells us, God wills that we personally shall come to know how vast a wealth is implied in the mystery, "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

The hymn of Henry Kirke White is the autobiography of his heart. It is his experience done in verse. It is the story of his spiritual darkness, storm-vexed soul, and vision of the Star that lighted him to peace. He was the son of a butcher, and during his early boyhood wrought with his father. At the age of fourteen he was working at a stocking-loom. Two years later he left this uncongenial task for the study of law. His precocious and versatile mind led him into the realms of chemistry and astronomy, drawing and music. He learned Latin and Greek, Italian and Spanish. His associates influenced him toward infidelity. One of these skeptical friends, Robert Almond, was converted through witnessing the happy death of a Christian; and fearing White's ridicule, avoided him. When the two met, Henry demanded an explanation; then ex-

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claimed, "Robert, you surely think worse of me than I deserve." The shock of separation softened his anger to reflection and repentance. He entered Cambridge as a student for the ministry. But before reaching the age of twenty-two, he shook hands with Death and smiled that he was free. He was full of concealed greatness, leaving us only fragments of his genius, among them the hymn which we best sing to the old melody of "Bonny Doon." Read the lines once more; and if the Star has never done for you what it did for Henry Kirke White, may this be the hour when his saving experience shall be repeated in you:

When, marshaled on the nightly plain,
The glittering host bestud the sky,
One star alone, of all the train,
Can fix the sinner's wandering eye.
Hark! Hark! to God the chorus breaks
From every host, from every gem;
But one alone the Saviour speaks—
It is the Star of Bethlehem.

Once on the raging seas I rode,
The storm was loud, the night was dark,
The ocean yawned, and rudely blowed
The wind that tossed my foundering bark.

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Deep horror then my vitals froze ;
Death-struck, I ceased the tide to stem ;
When suddenly a star arose,
It was the Star of Bethlehem !

It was my guide, my light, my all ;
It bade my dark forebodings cease,
And through the storm and danger's thrall
It led me to the port of peace.
Now safely moored, my perils o'er,
I'll sing, first in night's diadem,
For ever and for evermore,
The Star, the Star of Bethlehem !

XIII

CALVARY

OR

THE BELLS IN THE CHURCH OF
THE REDEEMER

*When they were come to the place, which
is called Calvary, there they crucified him.*

—Luke 23: 33.

CALVARY, OR THE BELLS IN THE CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

AMONG all the sacred mountains Calvary stands preeminent. Sinai, where amid cloud and smoke, fire and earthquake, the law was given. Horeb, where the bush was seen afire with God. Hor, where Aaron transferred his priestly garments to his son, and died. Pisgah, from whose lofty height Moses viewed his home and took his flight. Ebal and Gerizim, from whose neighboring sides the curses and blessings were pronounced. Carmel, where flames from heaven consumed Elijah's sacrifice. Tabor, from whose round top Barak descended with ten thousand men, and fighting with the stars in their courses overthrew Sisera and his hosts. Moriah, where Solomon built the holy and beautiful house. Hermon, below whose triple summit Jesus was transfigured, his garments more dazzling than the sunlit piles of snow above him. Olivet, where gravitation lost its power, and a chariot of cloud carried the ascending Lord out of sight. In moral splen-

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dor Calvary surpasses them all. It was there that God himself, dressed in a crimsoned garment, courted our love. It was there that at the interlocking of the ages Christ appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. It was there that the Light of the world hung on a cross, dying in the dark—for all. It was there that he suffered in the death-shade that I might see the sun. Blessed Calvary! All the light of sacred story gathers round its head sublime.

The traditional site, covered by the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, is certainly not the real one. Under that roof superstition and invention have gathered an astounding mass of incongruous pious frauds. You are shown the prison of Jesus, with his footprints in the rock; the stone pillars of St. Helena, which were long said to shed tears; the chapel of the one-eyed soldier who pierced Christ's side—blood and water from the wound spurting into his blind eye, restoring his sight, and converting him to the Christian faith; the marble tomb overhung with forty-three golden lamps, the lid containing a crack through which it is alleged holy fire from heaven comes at Eastertide; on a

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mole-hill, three holes where the crosses stood, the central hole lined with silver; five feet distant, the cleft made by the earthquake, the opening now covered by a brass slide and concealing a chasm only six inches deep; under this arrangement the grave of Adam, who was brought to life by a drop of Christ's blood falling on his skull. Shocked by such shams and impertinences, which belittle the name of Christianity, we turn away in search of historic realities. The Church of the Holy Sepulcher stands within the present walls, as it stood within the ancient walls. This is fatal to its claim.

Several things are evident from the Scriptures: Calvary was outside the city—we read that Jesus suffered without the gate; the place was near Jerusalem; it was close to a garden with a new tomb; it was on a leading thoroughfare, for the passers-by reviled him; it was a conspicuous spot which could be seen from afar—the women were looking on from a distance; it was popularly known as *Kranion* (skull), "Calvary" being the Latin equivalent for the Greek *Kranion* and the Hebrew *Golgotha*.

The hill just outside the Damascus Gate

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answers every requirement. On the south side it is an abrupt cliff, rising sixty feet above the roadway. In the rock it is easy to discern a huge skull—a bold forehead, a broad face, two eyeless sockets, traces of a nose, and beneath it a lateral gash which Time has chiseled into the likeness of a mouth. The ascent from the Damascus road on the west is somewhat steep; on the east the hill, dotted with Moslem graves, shelves rapidly toward the Kidron; while on the north, the slope to the pasture lands is more gradual.

One Sunday morning, taking our Bibles, we left our hotel outside the Joppa Gate, and wound around the city's northern wall to Calvary. Sitting there in the bright sunshine, we were reading the Gospel narratives of the crucifixion, when the bells in the Church of the Redeemer began to ring, calling men to worship him who was crucified on that summit where we sat. The church is near the center of the city. It is built of white stone, with a tall tower; a fine piece of modern architecture standing on ground once occupied by the Knights of St. John. The site was presented to the

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German Emperor by Sultan Abdul Aziz, to commemorate Crown Prince Frederick's visit to Constantinople in 1869. The church was dedicated in 1898 by Kaiser Wilhelm. He had invited several evangelical bodies of American Christians to participate in the dedication. Through the stupidity of a clerk the invitations were wrongly addressed; for example, one was sent to the "Superintendent of the Baptist Church, U. S. A." There is no such official. From the court chaplain at Berlin the correct address of the Lutherans was obtained, and so they were the only Americans represented. As we listened to the pealing of those bells, what holy feelings were awakened! We longed to break from the body and to join the worshiping chorus of the saints above. The gently chiming echoes made a melody sublime. Childhood joys returned, wafted on the breath of years. Memory bells in tuneful measure carried us back to our early faith. The whole tragedy of that Good Friday was revived, our Lord was again set forth crucified before our eyes, and we were bowing at his pierced feet.

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To me they were *The Bells of the Dying Redeemer*. There they crucified him, with his hands extended wide as mercy's span. He was making propitiation for the sins of the people. The Scripture writers leave us no doubt on this point, whatever views men may now hold. "I have no theory of the atonement," said a preacher whom I heard reading a paper; "I never did have any theory of the atonement; and I do not believe that the atonement is an essential part of Christian preaching." If he had kept the word "theory" in the last sentence, there would be little or no objection to his statement. It does not matter so much whether we have a *theory* of the atonement, just so we accept the *fact* of the atonement.

There are many theories. According to the Commercial Theory, Jesus suffered the exact equivalent of the sinner. Said General William Booth, "Christ shed his blood to pay the price, and he bought from God enough salvation to go round." In the Example Theory, Jesus is regarded as a mere martyr who redeems men by attracting them to share his sacrificial life. The Moral-Influence Theory holds that Jesus so reveals

God's love as to soften the heart and lead to repentance and reformation. By the Governmental Theory, Jesus did not offer his sacrifice to satisfy any demand inherent in God but to atone for a broken law. In brief form the Substitutionary Theory is "Jesus died for me." Those four words, Spurgeon declared, summed up all his theology. The adherents of the Ethical Theory tell us that Jesus was so related to God that he could meet the requirements of the divine nature, and was so united to humanity that he could and did voluntarily suffer in man's stead. Not all of these theories combined can exhaust the meaning of the Cross. The sufferings there were not a theory, but a fact; not a philosophy, but an experience; not a doctrine to be defended, but a gospel to be preached; not the solution of a theological difficulty, but the very foundation of Christianity.

Profound as is the mystery of the Cross, there are some things that we know. Through the sacrifice of Christ we are *forgiven*. In him we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins. Though in time past we were alienated and hostile, yet

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now has he *reconciled* us in the body of his flesh through death, to present us holy and without blemish and unprovable. We are *cleansed* by his blood from all sin. By his stripes, wounds that trickled with blood, we were *healed*. We were *redeemed*, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from our vain manner of life handed down from our fathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ. On this scripture Dr. James Denny comments:

By the blood of Christ Christians were ransomed. The effect of his death was that for them a peculiar kind of servitude ended; when it told on them, their life was no longer in bondage to vanity and custom. Life before the death of Christ has touched it is futile; it is a groping or fumbling after something it can never find; it gets into no effective contact with reality. When the power of Christ's passion enters into any life it is not futile any more; there is no more the need or the inclination to cry, all is vanity. Similarly, life before the death of Christ has touched it is a kind of tradition or custom, destitute of moral originality or initiative. It is the power of Christ's passion descending into the heart which really begets the new creature, to whom moral responsibility—his own—is an original thing, a kind of genius, in virtue of which he does what

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nobody else ever did, and feels both free and bound to do so. The moral originality of the New Testament life is a miracle that never grows old.

By the Cross of Christ we are *obligated* to a righteous life. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness. By the word of the cross we are *empowered*. To them that are perishing that message is foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. Through the Christ of Calvary we are *exalted* to a holy fellowship. He suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God. And so as I listened to the bells, though I could not comprehend the mystery of the sacrifice, I could hear the music of forgiveness, reconciliation, cleansing, healing, redemption, power, duty, and exaltation.

When George Nixon Briggs was governor of Massachusetts, three of his friends visited the Holy Land. While there, they climbed Golgotha's slope, and cut from its summit a small stick to be used as a cane. On their return home, they presented it to the Governor, saying, "We wanted you to

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know that when we stood on Calvary, we thought of you." Accepting the gift with all due courtesy and gratitude, the Governor tenderly added, "But I am still more thankful, gentlemen, that there was another One who thought of me there." That is the secret of our love for him. He thought of us. He loved us, and gave himself for us. With great swelling words some have talked about "the historical inevitability" of Christ's death; as if the Prince of life got killed by being caught in the crush of social, political, and religious hatred. We know that he had power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again. No man took it from him. He was more than a martyr. His sacrifice was vicarious, as well as voluntary; and so we keep singing:

'Tis love, 'tis love; thou diedst for me,
I hear thy whisper in my heart.

From the belfry that Sunday morning, I heard *The Bells of the Risen Redeemer*. If according to the hapless plaint, "Christ be now dead, if he still sleep in the lone town far hence, while on his grave with shining eyes the Syrian stars look down," then we

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are of all men most miserable. There is no comfort or help for us today; only the fond memory of a beautiful but ineffectual life. But he lives, as is evidenced by the empty tomb; by the testimony of many competent eye-witnesses; by the living church whose growth and power are utterly inconsistent with a foundation laid in the mud and slime of mistake and fraud; and by the personal experience of Christians everywhere who know that Jesus keeps his promise to be with us day by day. Thomas Moody, my missionary friend on the Congo, told me that at times in the long grass of Africa he has been so conscious of Christ's presence as to shout aloud for joy.

A few steps from where we sat, down the western slope, was a tomb, the only rock-sepulcher in the immediate vicinity. General Gordon's published conviction concerning the site where our Lord was crucified and buried attracted Miss Louise Hope to Jerusalem. Convinced of the historical genuineness of the grave, she went to Constantinople, where through the intercession of the British ambassador she succeeded in purchasing the property. Then she con-

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veyed it to a board of Trustees, consisting of herself, Canon Tristram, the Duke of Argyle, the Marquis of Northampton, and the Earl of Aberdeen. They cleared up the ground, built a wall around the garden, and erected a keeper's lodge. Like Magdalene, we took courage just to look into the tomb; then like Peter and John, we entered; and there once more we heard the angel's message: "Fear not ye; for I know ye seek Jesus, who hath been crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, even as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples, he is risen from the dead."

Out in the open those echoing bells were harmoniously sounding the seven tones of the soul's musical scale. The tone of *a transformed sorrow*. The sorrow of the disciples was turned into joy. They were glad when they saw the Lord. The tone of *a restored fellowship*. This was broken by death, and for three days lay buried. Then with burning hearts his friends talked with him again. The tone of *a forgiven past*. Peter must have felt that all was lost, until the Christ with infinite delicacy appeared to

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him alone and gave him the relief of sobbing out his confession and being forgiven. The tone of *an inward peace*. In the upper room he showed the ten and the rest met together his hands and his side, and filled them with his peace. The tone of *a life commission*. Again to the same little company he said: "Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." The tone of *a spiritual anointing*. He breathed on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. The tone of *an assured immortality*. Because I live, he declared, ye shall live also.

From their pulpits of stone, in the upper air, sounding aloft were *The Bells of the Worshipped Redeemer*. From the empty tomb, near which we sat, the women on the first Easter morning were running with the resurrection news, when Jesus himself met them. Terrified yet rejoicing, they seized his feet and worshiped him. One week later Thomas passed from Doubting Castle to the Upper Room, where he saw the nail-marks of the Crucified, and worshiped him with the confession, "My Lord, and my God!" On a familiar hill in Galilee, the

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Eleven met him by appointment, probably at the same time with the five hundred mentioned by Paul. There they saw him and worshiped him, though some doubted. With uplifted hands he blessed the Apostolic Group on Olivet; and when he had passed through the veil of the heavenly sanctuary, they worshiped him, and returned to the city with great joy.

In the Kircherian Museum at Rome is a piece of wall-plaster taken from the ancient school for imperial slaves on the Palatine. On this plaster is scratched a caricature of the crucifixion—a man with the head of an ass, nailed to the cross; at his feet a praying disciple, named and described in three Greek words, “Alexamenos worships God.” The sketch was probably executed by a pagan page to embarrass his Christian companions, the ass-head being a reminder of Christ’s birth in a stable. It was not long, however, before Christianity had seized not cities only but the lesser towns also, and the open country. So Pliny the Younger affirmed, in the earliest authentic account of Christian worship, outside the New Testament. While governor

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of Bithynia, he wrote to the Emperor Trajan (about the year 112) that he could find nothing worse in these adherents of "a contagious superstition" than that they assembled on a fixed day before daylight to sing responsive hymns to Christ as God, and to bind themselves by a solemn oath to abstain from theft, adultery, perjury, and dishonesty.

In the English town of Kettering on a Lord's Day morning, an hour before his translation, Andrew Fuller, who had held the ropes while Carey went down into the mission mines of India, heard the congregation singing in his chapel that adjoined the home where he lay. "I wish I had strength enough," he said to his daughter Sarah. "To do what, father?" she asked. "To worship, child," he replied. It was the last impulse as it had been the first in his Christian life. In the Church of the Redeemer, whose bells had now hushed our souls, German Emperor and Syrian peasant bowed together in acknowledgment of the Saviourhood of Jesus; and on Calvary that day we too united with holy convocations everywhere in the worship of him who was dead

but is alive forevermore, and triumphantly holds the keys of death.

Glancing toward the church tower once more, I heard *The Bells of the Drawing Redeemer*. It was of his approaching experience on Calvary that he had spoken to the Greeks on Tuesday of Passion Week: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself." This he said, signifying by what manner of death he should die. His sufferings there made him the world's magnet. By the attractive power of his disinterested love he began drawing men at once—three thousand at Pentecost. Twenty-five years later James and the elders told Paul that many tens of thousands of Jews had accepted the faith.

He is still at the task of drawing men—all sorts and conditions of men. He goes to Virginia, attracts John Albert Broadus at the age of sixteen, keeps him on double duty as preacher and educator all his days, and enables him to sing with his last whispered breath, "Jesus, lover of my soul." In Porto Rico he magnetizes a policeman, Del-fino Muler, turns him into an evangelist, and inspires him to testify to his people:

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“You all know me, know what I was, and you can see what Christ has done for me.” He is lifted up in British America, and Benjamin Cameron, the Indian, who in his savage days had shot and eaten his own wife, experiences the same fascination and greets every stranger with the question: “Are you a Christian? Do you love my Saviour? If so, give me your hand.” Across in England he throws a charm over Alfred Tennyson and inclines him to say, as he caresses a flower in his garden, “What the sun is to this rose, Jesus Christ is to my soul.” In New Guinea he shows his wounded hands and feet to Ruatoka, himself born a heathen, and impels him to write the London Missionary Society regarding the cannibals who had murdered Chalmers, “I ask of you a great privilege—permit me to go to the place where he was killed, and tell his murderers about the love of God in Christ.” In the Philippines he looks, from the cross, upon Si Loy when mobbed and beaten, and constrains this Baptist deacon to cry, “I cannot strike back, for there is a great love in my heart.” In Japan he reminds Neesima of the great

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price with which he was bought, and empowers him to say, when importuned to enter the Educational Department of the Imperial Government: "I have only one answer—my life is not my own; it belongs to Jesus Christ. Many years ago I solemnly swore to devote my entire time and effort to his cause, and I cannot take back my words and my heart." In China he draws the heart of Fung Chak, a fatherless lad whose mother was an idol-worshiper; converts him at a mission in Canton; encourages him to tell his mother what a wonderful Saviour he has found; sends him to preach the gospel for forty-six years, and to translate many gospel hymns into the Chinese tongue; and then permits him to baptize his old mother at the age of seventy-two. In Africa he is uplifted as the thorn-crowned King of grief, whose blood cleanses from all sin, and Lutate, surnamed Barnabas, son of consolation, with shining face and melodious heart, tells Richards, "I do believe Jesus has taken away my sins, and I do feel so happy." In Siam his dying bleeding love enthralls Thang-Kan, the Garo, causing him to refuse a lucrative government position,

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saying, "The official might bid me go north, when the Lord Jesus was bidding me go south." In Burma he uses his cross as a magnet, attaches to himself U Po Hline, enables him to count everything but refuse as contrasted with Christ, sets him as pastor over the church at Pyinmana, and strengthens him to pray when sinking under exhaustion from missionary tours: "I have been away doing thy work; I did the best I could; now give me strength to reach my home." And in India with tender sympathy he reaches down and touches a carpenter, Krishna Pal, gives him to Carey as the first Hindu convert, and inspires him to leave to the church a communion hymn for all time:

O thou, my soul, forget no more
The Friend who all thy sorrows bore.

Drawing is not dragging. He draws but never drags. He persuades, but never compels. Do you feel that mysterious heavenly drawing? Yield to it now.

Time having turned backward in its flight, I was sitting under the shadow of the crosses, on either side a robber, and

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Jesus in the midst; and in the last sounds from the white belfry I discerned *The Bells of the Separating Redeemer*. His love is not a horizontal love, creating a cleavage of upper and middle and nether social strata, but a perpendicular love that runs from the highest to the lowest level of human society, and separates men to the right and to the left.

At his right on Calvary hung the penitent thief, who was strangely moved by the unselfishness of the Central Cross. He wondered what kind of kingdom it could be of which such a Being was to be King; and with a venture of faith he cried, "Jesus, remember me." The slumbering pulse of the sin-ridden soul of the impenitent thief at the left was in nowise stirred; and without a prayer on his lips, he slipped over the brink into a hopeless eternity.

Christ's cross was a further separating force that day. Spiritually it stood between the confessing centurion and the gambling soldiers. With the penitent thief it arrayed the Roman officer, who had never seen a death like that. He was convinced that Jesus was not what the infuriated mob

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thought him to be, but was truly the Son of God. At the left with the impenitent thief were the heartless soldiers, who drove the nails through the hands and feet of Christ as cheerfully as they had driven the spikes into the two malefactors; then unfeelingly they sat down to gamble for the inner garment, the seamless robe, woven perhaps by his mother.

In drawing the sorrowing disciples to himself, Jesus separated them from the unsympathetic crowd. The women who remained near the cross and the timid group who stood afar off, stunned but loving, shared the spiritual company of the centurion and the penitent thief; while the priests, the scribes, and the elders united with the impenitent thief, the gambling soldiers, and the cruel mockers in flinging his very agonies into his face as a refutation of his claims. On which side of the cross are you?

Munkacsy's great painting "Christ on Calvary" is twenty by thirty feet. He wrought on the canvas three years. Calvary is a bare hill. In the distance the towers and domes of the city are visible. In the

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forefront are three crosses. One holds the impenitent thief, whose head is dropped upon his bosom. Near him sits a soldier clutching a spear. At Christ's right hangs the penitent thief, with his agonized face turned pleadingly toward the central cross. The group of grief are nearest the suffering Son of God. Mary, his mother, with her hands presses his feet and bedews them with her tears. Magdalene, her red hair flowing, also kneels and covers her face with both hands. The other Mary looks at the divine Sufferer's face; and, startled by his moans, raises her left hand, at the same time extending her right toward the executioner as if to invoke his pity. He, with his ladder and hatchet, eyes the group of grief with coarse satisfaction. Near the weeping mother stands John, erect, hopeless, staring straight ahead. At the center of the foreground a young man, with both hands outstretched, listens with amazement to the prayer that the murderers may be forgiven. The high priest with long white beard leans back provokingly. His left arm is uplifted and he shouts derisively, "Let the Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from

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the cross, that we may see and believe." Two scribes walk away in animated discussion, the younger trying to convince the elder that a malefactor is paying a deserved penalty. The centurion, on his charger, hearing the loud cry of the broken-hearted God, looks back with conviction, faith, and confession. The sun has hidden in darkness. Through a rift in the black sky a ray of light falls on the dying Christ, indicating that there is a heavenly side to earth's most awful tragedy. As we gaze at this masterpiece, no matter where our eyes may turn, they always come back to the Central Figure. His body shines with interior light. His face is furrowed with pain, yet glows with unspeakable love. His eyes are full of anguish. They are raised, but there is no comfort, the sky is brass. Wearily the thorn-crowned head falls back on his left shoulder; and we hear him saying, with mouth half open, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

We do not wonder at the experience of a sailor lad who saw this picture when it was in Toronto. He looked and looked again until the springs in his head sent the waters

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down his cheeks. He felt that his sins gave sharpness to the nails and pointed every thorn. As he reverently tiptoed away, he said to the old verger: "My mother often told me that story, but I never believed it. I see it now. It is all true. He died for me. I am going out of this place a Christian." Are you?

XIV

IF THE DEAD ARE NOT RAISED

Now if Christ is preached that he hath been raised from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither hath Christ been raised; and if Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we witnessed of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, neither hath Christ been raised; and if Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable. But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep.

—1 Corinthians 15: 12-20.

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This chapter has about it the odor of immortality. It is the chapter of Easter Day.

The day when the Prince of Peace with his pierced hands broke asunder the fetters of death, and on those broken fetters wrote our title to immortality.

The day that gives us a gospel fragrant with the spices which the women brought to the tomb—the gospel of empty sepulchers, forgiven sins, exultant hopes, abounding labors.

The day that links the life here with that beyond the sky-line, and thus admonishes us to live no longer unto ourselves, but unto him who for our sakes died and rose again.

The day when light from the eternal years streams through the valley of the death-shade, revealing there the print of Christ's shoe and heartening us to approach the shadows without fear, knowing that since our Forerunner lives we shall live also.

The day which declares the grave a van-

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quished foe, that narrow bed being now only a chamber of peace whose window opens toward the sunrise, where, like Bunyan's pilgrim, the bodies of our sainted friends sleep until the morning breaks.

The day of springtime indeed, when song-birds are heard in the inner world of thought and when the flowers of faith and hope and love appear in the garden of the heart.

When Agricola died, his son-in-law Tacitus, who was a contemporary of Paul, wrote: "If there is a place for the spirits of the pious; if, as the wise suppose, great souls do not become extinct with their bodies"—Oh, that torturing *If!* How its uncertainty hung like a haunting specter over that Roman grave! To Tacitus dying was not "that first breath which our souls draw when we enter life." To him a reunion with departed friends might be a blissful reality; or the hope of such fellowship might be nothing more than "a dream of love kissing the lips of death." When Paul said "if" there was no accent of uncertainty. "If the dead are not raised"—that to him was a supposition contrary to fact.

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There are two ways of proving a thing. One way is to present the direct evidence. The other is to show that the contrary cannot be true. In this great chapter the apostle uses both methods. It is my purpose here to consider only his negative argument. According to this, five dire conclusions follow a denial of the resurrection.

I

If the dead are not raised, "neither hath Christ been raised." The whole includes every part. If there is no possibility of a resurrection for *all* human bodies, there is no assurance of a resurrection for *any* human body. These Corinthian skeptics showed their bad logic by admitting that Christ arose, and at the same time thinking it a thing incredible that God should raise the dead. In his laboratory, we are told, Faraday had a costly silver cup. One day in his absence, a workman knocked the cup into a jar of acid. When he tried to recover it, he found that it had dissolved and completely disappeared. The great chemist, on his return, dropped some chemicals into the jar, precipitated the silver, then sent the

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shapeless mass to a silversmith, and had it made into a vessel more beautiful than the original. If Faraday could gather up the particles of a dissolved cup and reshape them after a better pattern, surely God can take the body of our humiliation, even though returned to dust, and fashion it according to the body of Christ's glory.

Four theories have been invented to explain away the resurrection of Christ. (1) The swoon theory of Schleiermacher. This was also advocated by Paulus. They taught that Jesus did not really die; that he was not dead when taken down from the cross; he had merely fallen into a swoon caused by pain and exhaustion. When laid in the cool air of the cavern-tomb, permeated with the restoring fragrance of the spices, he revived. But so weak was he that he could not bear to have Magdalene touch him. His clothes he borrowed from the gardener. The white-robed messengers in the garden were not angels, but members of an ascetic sect with whom he retired to a lodge, where he died with none to know his strange and terrible secret. A grain of common sense will reveal the inadequacy of this theory.

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Such a weakened, half-dead Christ, with unhealed wounds, struggling out of the sepulcher, could never (in the words of another) have convinced the disciples that he was the conqueror of death; he could by no possibility have changed their sorrow to enthusiasm, or lifted their reverence into worship. Besides, the theory is wholly inconsistent with the facts. The soldiers saw that he was *dead*, and therefore broke not his legs. The chief priests spoke of what that deceiver said *while he was yet alive*. Pilate learned from the centurion that Jesus was *dead*, and granted the *corpse* to Joseph.

(2) The fraud theory of Renan. This denies to our Lord "sincerity with himself," attributing to him "innocent artifice" and the toleration of "pious fraud," as in the expectancy of his own resurrection, specifically in the raising of Lazarus where he appears as a willing accessory, if not an actual accomplice of deception. While often classed among the advocates of the vision theory, Renan went much further. The first witnesses of the resurrection he charged not only with illusion, but also with conscious and purposeful deceit. It was the

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little Christian society that worked the resurrection miracle. Magdalene revived the shade of her Master, impressed on others the shadow created by her delicate sensibility, and gave to the world a resuscitated god. The disciples scrupled not to introduce their narratives with all sorts of embellishments. In the upper room, on the first Easter evening, some pretended to see the marks made by the nails and spear. Mutually inebriated, the faithful imposed upon each other by their mutual conceits. To end the Jewish report that the disciples had come by night and stolen away the body, these Christians deliberately invented the military guard and the seal affixed to the tomb. Such romantic temperaments and fraudulent conspiracies are wholly irreconcilable with all we know about Christ and his friends. A moral structure like that of Christianity, as Robertson Nicoll declares, is not founded on rottenness. The theory is now so utterly discredited that men of all schools, Professor Bruce tells us, would be ashamed to identify themselves with so base a suggestion.

(3) The telegram theory of Keim. He

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would have us believe that while the body of Jesus remained in the grave, his spirit made supernatural impressions on the disciples—sent telegrams from heaven, assuring them that he was still alive and concerned for them; his disembodied soul so manifested itself as to produce effects similar to those which a physical perception of his body would have produced. This is “a bastard supernaturalism,” objectionable even to unbelievers. It does not account for the empty sepulcher, or for such words of the Master as “handle me and see.” It confuses resurrection with immortality, the reanimation of a dead body with the unbroken survival of personal life. It puts us back into the realm of miracle, which Keim seeks to escape, and makes Christ a deceiver.

(4) The hallucination theory of Strauss. The appearances of Jesus, according to this view, were only subjective visions resulting from a feverish expectancy. But Strauss himself admits that such a frame of mind would require time for its development. Such ecstatic imaginings rise out of prolonged absorption, and tend to increase in number and vividness as the actualities re-

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cede. In the Gospel narratives these visions begin within three days and end in forty.

Physiological psychology, Doctor Mullins reminds us, insists that every hallucination is the product of previous brain-states due to abnormal stimulus from within or without. The disciples had no such brain-states as Strauss imagined. Their eyes were incredulous and their hearts surprised when they saw Jesus. That they did not expect him to rise, we have eight proofs: (1) Mary Magdalene thought that his body had been removed, not raised. (2) The disciples, as they mourned and wept, disbelieved when she told them that he was alive, and had been seen by her. (3) To verify her story, Peter and John ran to the tomb, as yet not knowing the scripture that he must rise again from the dead. (4) Just as the eastern sky began to flush with promise of the first Easter dawn, the women with wakeful love came with their spices, expecting not to find his grave empty, but to anoint his dead body. (5) Only after they had been reminded of his words by the angels did these women remember that while Jesus was yet in Galilee he told them

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that he must be crucified, and the third day rise again. (6) When the women rehearsed their vision, their words appeared to the eleven and all the rest as idle talk. (7) The ten in the upper room doubted the account brought by the two who journeyed to Emmaus. (8) Thomas, when told of his risen Lord, refused to believe, unless he should not only see with his own eyes, but thrust his hand into the nail-prints and the wounded side.

Within the forty days, between our Lord's resurrection and his ascension, he appeared ten times—five times on the first Easter: first to Magdalene; then to the women with their spices; then to Peter alone; then to the two walking to Emmaus; then to the ten in the upper room that night; then one week later to the eleven in the same upper room, this time Thomas being present; then to the seven on the lake; then to the eleven with the five hundred on a mountain in Galilee; then to James at Jerusalem; and last of all, to the apostles just before his ascension. They saw him not once, but often; not in one place, but in many; not only at night, but in broad daylight. They walked with

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him, talked with him, ate with him. Hallucination may be possible in the case of one man, or perhaps two; but not in the experience of seven, and eleven, and five hundred. "As the Christian church is not built upon rottenness, so it is not built on mist."

The first conclusion is contrary to evidence.

II

If the dead are not raised, "then is our preaching vain." Paul reminds the Corinthians of what he had preached to them—that Christ rose from the dead. They had not believed "in vain"—heedlessly, without realizing the facts involved. They had accepted his message, and had been saved. That message had been to them the good tidings of their salvation. But if the dead are not raised, his preaching (he declares) was vain. He now uses another word. It means hollow, void of reality. There was nothing in it, as we say.

Let us see whether the preaching of Christ crucified and risen has been a vain thing. William Carey, who had been ridi-

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culed as a tinker and tub-preacher, carried to India this evangel of the resurrection. He revolutionized the agricultural, social, and religious condition of that vast empire; put out the heathen fires that burned widows alive; started schools for native children; made twenty-eight versions of the Scriptures; and planted twenty-six gospel churches on pagan soil. When Adoniram Judson went to Burma, there was not even the semblance of a civilized government, and he found that the tender mercies of the king were cruel. He fondly dreamed of gathering a church of one hundred and translating the Bible into Burmese. Not only did he finish his translation, but he established sixty-three churches with a membership of seven thousand baptized natives, thereby laying the foundation of Christianity deep down in the Burman heart. One Christmas morning near Ongole, Doctor Clough found his compound filled with a multitude of Telugus, who had come to ask Christian baptism. They were held back more than six months, so that every applicant might be thoroughly examined and tested. Then on July 3, 1878, two thousand

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two hundred and twenty-two were baptized in a single day. With his native preachers he then went throughout his field, preaching and baptizing; and before the end of the year nine thousand had been added, and the largest Baptist church in the world had been formed. Not long ago Thomas Moody wrote me from Sona Bata, Congo Belge, Africa. The people had come up for their *Matondo*, a sort of associational gathering, some of the attendants having walked one hundred miles. After forty-two candidates were baptized, making eleven hundred and ninety-two for the year (the fourth year of the great revival), the worshipers, amid handclapping and hallelujahs, made a thank-offering of five thousand francs. Andre Ukusu then preached a notable sermon, and one thousand partook of the Lord's Supper. Twenty-seven churches with nine thousand members and two hundred schools with seven thousand boys and girls as pupils are now in that field where, when my friend went there thirty-four years before, there was not a single Christian.

Similar testimony can be found in all ages of the church. Nineteen centuries of sift-

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ing and testing proclaim with ever-increasing emphasis that preaching is not a thing void of reality and power.

The second conclusion is contrary to history.

III

If the dead are not raised, "your faith also is vain." That is, unreal, unsubstantial; it has no content; it holds nothing; it has no Saviour—he is dead, and on his grave with shining eyes the Syrian stars look down. If Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain, Paul repeats, this time using a different word, which means void of power; your faith is ineffectual; it does not deliver from sin.

In my church was an elect lady, whose devotion to Christ was as fragrant as Mary's costly spikenard. In a neighboring town lived her brother, well advanced in years, but not a Christian. She invited him to her home, thinking that he might be induced to attend the meetings which Evangelist Sunday was conducting in our city. One night I found him in the vast throng; and offered, when the appeal for decisions was made, to

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accompany him down "the trail." He replied that he did not think it necessary to go forward in order to be a Christian. I readily agreed, and told him that he could be saved just where he was. I explained to him the three steps to Christ. He must feel himself to be a sinner in God's sight, and therefore in need of a Saviour, according to Romans 3: 23, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Then he must recognize that Jesus is our only hope. I quoted Acts 4: 12: "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." I showed him that we may accept both of these truths, and still be lost. We may believe that as sinners we need a Saviour and that Jesus is the only one who can save; but if we stop there, we are yet in our sins. We must take a third step. We must consciously and definitely begin trusting Christ as our personal Saviour. When we have done this, we have his own promise: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life" (John 6: 47). I said, "Will you here and now begin trusting

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him?" He replied, "Is that what it means to become a Christian?" I assured him it was, if I rightly understood my Bible. "I'm willing to begin now," he said. We knelt there in the sawdust, and in prayer he yielded his heart and life to Christ. It was late when he reached his sister's home; but he awakened all the family, and they had a prayer-and-praise meeting at midnight. He soon returned to his own home, united with the church, began giving and working and testifying. In order to get into the kingdom (so Jesus taught) he had to go back to childhood and enter as a little child. With a child's heart, he now had a special fondness for children; and it was when he was sitting among them at the church one day, while they were rehearsing for a Christmas entertainment, that he was suddenly translated. He went with a smile, and no one doubted where he went.

We Christians, with multitudes of God's people, can testify that when we began to love and trust and obey the Christ who was "marked out" to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection of the dead, our faith was real, it was effectual, it did de-

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liver us. We experienced the forgiveness of sins, and a joy unspeakable filled our souls.

The third conclusion is contrary to experience.

IV

If the dead are not raised, "we are found false witnesses of God." Not mistaken witnesses, you observe, but false witnesses. And that about God. He attributes Christ's resurrection to the Father. If the dead rise not, he has lied about God, the very worst kind of imposture. In their desperation, some have suggested that Paul's conversion and vision of Christ were due to epilepsy and a thunderstorm. If I knew the brand of epilepsy he had and the kind of thunderstorm he encountered, I should pray that God would smite every unbeliever with an epileptic attack and shake the world with perpetual thunder. In the case of this apostle and his fellow witnesses, there was no innocent artifice or excusable hallucination. It was simply a matter of plain testimony, given by many intelligent, reliable witnesses to an external, concrete fact. Either Christ

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arose from the dead, or they lied in affirming it.

But liars do not become ethical teachers, nor do body-snatchers become martyrs. There was no motive for such falsehood. Their interest all lay the other way. Such testimony meant the loss of property and reputation, the crucifixion of every worldly ambition; it meant buffeting, homelessness, persecution; it meant that they be reviled, defamed, counted the offscouring of the earth. Take this man as a sample. He was given to understand at the start how many things he must suffer. At Lystra he was stoned till thought dead, and then dragged out of the city. This was only one experience in his long catalogue of woes. Five times he received forty stripes, save one. Three times was he beaten with rods, and three times he was shipwrecked. His life was endangered by rivers and by robbers. Frequent were his sleepless nights. He was in hunger and thirst, starving many a time, cold and ill-clad. "Paul," we cry to him, "do you realize what you are doing?" And we hear him answer: "Yea, I count all things loss for the priceless privilege of

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knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have suffered the loss of everything, and reckon it all as refuse, that I may know him and the power of his resurrection."

While at the Roman Forum, I climbed down into the Mamertine prison, a hideous dungeon looking like one cistern set on top of another—called by Hawthorne an evil den, haunted with black memories and indistinct surmises of guilt and suffering. Into that lowest darkness, let down by a rope, many believe that Paul was thrust. He was writing his farewell letter. Near him, still to be seen, was an iron door opening into the Cloaca Maxima, Rome's chief sewer. Like other prisoners, he expected his lifeless body soon to be thrown through that door into the sewer, and he wrote: "I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day." I submit that men do not thus suffer imprisonment and hazard life for a lie.

The fourth conclusion is contrary to reason.

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V

If the dead are not raised, "then they also who are fallen asleep in Christ," that is, the very flower of the race, "have perished." They thought they were being lulled to sleep, when they were falling into ruin. Comforted by what seemed to be Christ's presence, and supported by the promises of his gospel, they thought they were sleeping to wake again, but were cruelly deceived.

I saw one of God's children in her last hours. She was the kind of material out of which the martyrs were made. She would have been burned at the stake rather than deny her Lord. She had spent her life in doing good—visiting the sick, the poor, the sorrowful; inspiring the young with higher ideals; throwing bursts of sunshine into darkened lives; in social and religious gatherings, imparting new conceptions of Christian duty and privilege; organizing church workers and leading them to better service; by her unhesitating faith and contagious enthusiasm teaching Christ's sufferers how to endure affliction with a

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radiant patience. When sympathy was offered in her own paroxysms of pain, she replied, "The song of peace in my heart is so strong and clear that it drowns the voice of suffering." Then I heard her pray. She said: "Saviour, I thank thee for all thou hast been to me, for all thy love and goodness. They have been above everything I could ask or think. There is no death for me. This experience is but a step farther on. As the sheep passes under the shepherd's rod, so thou, Good Shepherd, art having me pass beneath thy rod, that I may be safe within the fold. Thou hast permitted no fear. In my heart is only sweet rest. Help me that there may be no valley; there has been none yet, no darkness yet." Thus praying, she passed into what she believed was the undimmed presence of her Lord. Was she deceived? From such a conclusion we instinctively recoil.

You who mourn a vanished face, believing that the Lord has taken but to add more beauty and a diviner grace, and that you will find once more beyond earth's sorrows, beyond those skies, in the fair city of the sure foundations, those heavenly eyes, with

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the same welcome shining through their sweetness that met you here, eyes from whose beauty God has banished weeping and wiped away the tear—are you deceived? Have they perished? There is a God. If so, there is justice. There would be no justice, if the virtuous and the vicious come to the same end.

The fifth conclusion is contrary to instinct.

Since, therefore, a denial of the resurrection is contrary to evidence, and contrary to history, and contrary to experience, and contrary to reason, and contrary to instinct, we unite with Paul in his triumphant outburst, “Now is Christ risen from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep.”

XV

THE EASTER NOTE

THE EASTER NOTE

ONE memorable Sunday morning, I left my hotel in Jerusalem, followed the road along the city's northern wall, and ascended Mt. Calvary. Seated there in the sunshine, I was reading the account of our Lord's crucifixion, when the bells in the Church of the Redeemer began to ring, calling people to worship the crucified and risen Christ. It was an experience never to be forgotten.

When the chiming had ceased, I walked reverently down the western slope to a garden, in which a sepulcher hewn out of solid limestone is located. It is the only rock tomb in that vicinity. It is plainly a Jewish tomb, and evidently belonged to some wealthy man, like Joseph. It was a new tomb, even yet not finished. It was "nigh at hand," as John tells us. It is the only burial-place that answers every requirement of the garden sepulcher.

Across the doorway is hollowed a groove along which the rounded stone was once rolled to close the opening. Cross-pieces in-

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serted by the Crusaders, to make feed-troughs for their horses, are still in place. Stepping inside the tomb, you are confronted with the anointing stone projecting from the farther wall toward the door. Against the wall at the extreme right is a space large enough, if finished, to accommodate two bodies. In the southeast corner a slab is set up between the south wall and the anointing stone; these with the east wall make a complete *loculus*, or bed for one. At the southern end of this bed a pillow is cut in the rock. Thoughtlessly I stepped over into this *loculus* and began measuring it, when suddenly it occurred to me that my unhallowed feet were standing where the sacred body of my blessed Lord once lay. Trembling with emotion, I climbed out, and with uplifted face asked forgiveness. Then I read the Easter story, and worshiped.

I had just come from the Tombs of the Kings, across the Nile from Luxor. Far under the mountain I had descended to an immense cubical room, whose blue ceiling glowed with golden stars, and whose approach was ornamented with hieroglyphics of the king's exploits. In the center of this

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room stood a huge sandstone sarcophagus, enclosing a thick wooden coffin. Within that double enclosure lay the body of Amenophis the Second, who had been lying there shrouded and garlanded for more than thirty-three hundred years! With bared head in the Calvary sepulcher, I thanked God not for a *royal* tomb, but for an *empty* tomb. Then I thought of Mohammed's grave, said to be decorated with rubies and sapphires and diamonds to the amount of \$10,000,000, but covering still all that is mortal of the prophet; and I thanked God not for a *jeweled* tomb, but for an *empty* tomb. The message of the bells lingered with me. I hear them yet, sounding the Easter note, which I now bring to you.

It is a *note of gladness in a world of sorrow*. "Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord." So the record reads in John's Gospel. In the upper room when he told them that he was going away, they were thrown into consternation. They were amazed—half stupefied with a grief for which they could find no intelligible reason and from which they could see no possible deliverance. How could they ever face the

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future without his guidance? They felt what some of us have discovered, that the man who has once walked with Jesus can never quite dissociate himself from the memory of that happy and holy fellowship. To assuage their sorrow he said to them, "I shall see you again, and your hearts will rejoice with a joy that no one can take from you."

Then came the tragedy of the cross. The crucifixion had been a judgment-day for them. It had pronounced sentence on their unfaithfulness. They had forsaken him in his hour of direst distress. He was dead. They were disappointed in him, and disappointed in themselves. Behind that sealed stone, where the guard was set, their hopes were buried with his lifeless body. But he saw them again, according to his promise. It was the first Easter evening. Through the locked door he came, with a message of peace. Oh, the unspeakable gladness of it! He had not been transferred to a realm where he would no more need them. Showing them his hands and his side, he commissioned them to tell the world that by those wounds which trickled with blood men

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may be healed. Their grief was turned into gladness.

Dr. Robert William Dale was a preacher, a philosopher, a theologian, and the greatest political force in Birmingham, where in Carr's Lane Meeting House he was the honored pastor. He was not the kind of man to suffer from hallucinations. While preparing an Easter sermon, suddenly with all the vividness of a new revelation he became conscious of Christ's presence. His son, Sir Alfred Dale of Liverpool University, writes that his father paced up and down his study in the greatest excitement, saying, "Jesus is living!" Thereafter every Sunday was Easter in that church. At every service a hymn of praise was sung to the living Christ. People sometimes thought that the preacher had misread his calendar. But he had not mixed his dates—he had found his Lord. From that day Jesus to him was not an absentee Christ enthroned afar; not a dead Christ entombed in history; not an impersonal Christ imprisoned in a creed. He was the Christ who yearns to fulfill his promise to be with us always, day by day, until the close of the

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age. The source of gladness is this Easter vision. Let us pray that the dimness of our soul may be taken away, and that in the light which floods the eyes of our heart we may see *Him*.

The Easter note is *a note of hope in a world of despair*. God has begotten us anew, Peter tells us, unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Were it not for that resurrection, we might be pardoned for feeling as did some of Christ's contemporaries. The Romans had thirty epithets for death, and all of them full of hopeless grief. They called it the mower with his scythe, the hunter with his snares, the demon with his cup of poison, the inexorable jailer with his keys, the king of terror with his ruthless tread. They thought of it as an iron slumber, an eternal night. To them a dead friend was but a shattered pillar, a crushed flower with its fragrance gone, a prostrate harp with its strings snapped and all its music lost.

On Easter morning a new light broke across the mournful marbles. Despair was converted into resignation. The grave be-

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came the gateway into the shadowless land of life eternal. At the far end of the valley of the death-shade lay the inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and fadeless. Beyond the sunset and the evening star stood the Father's house with its hallowed reunion. Since that first Easter, death has become not an iron slumber, but only a falling asleep in Christ to awaken in his likeness; only an exchange of homes—a passage out from the tent-house of the body into the many mansions not made with hands; only an exodus from a land of bondage, an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour.

Harry Lauder was resting in his London home, when a telegram announced that his son, Captain John Lauder, had been killed somewhere in France. For days and nights his brain burned with sickening, despairing thoughts. The raging agony at the realization of his loss nearly unhinged his reason. From the day of that son's birth, he had been the father's one pride and joy. To make that son's future secure he had traveled thousands of miles and wrought incessantly. Of what use was it all now? Every spark

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of ambition was quenched. Work seemed tasteless. Life, instead of being crammed with joy, was an aching void. He raved against the cruel fates that had taken his boy. Black despair settled down over his soul.

Then one day he suddenly realized that he had forgotten the future life. He came to see that while pain and grief had been blinding his eyes, God had been waiting patiently for the first sharp agony to pass, that He might lift the veil and reveal the land beyond. "Oh," he exclaims, "that I could convey to you the healing balm which that thought brought to my soul! I would that I could picture to you the joy that lay in the assurance of seeing my John again. I imagined him holding out his arms to his mother and me, that he might fold us once more in his strong embrace, and in that unbreakable hope my distress was assuaged." In the dawn of the Easter hope the shadows of despair flee away.

This suggests that the Easter note is *a note of comfort in a world of bereavement*. Magdalene standing by the sepulcher, weeping aloud, presents a pathetic figure. She

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was perhaps the most inconsolable of all the mourners for the Crucified. She could not bring herself to leave the place, like Peter and John. Her love held her irresistibly to the spot. She did not venture to enter the tomb, as did they; but as she wept, she took courage just to look in. Conscious that some one had drawn near, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but through the blinding veil of her tears mistook him for the gardener. Then in the well-remembered accent of other days, he tenderly spoke her name, "Mary," and she cried in glad recognition, "Rabboni!" To this bereaved woman the risen Christ made his first appearance, addressed his first question, and gave his first command. With the glad news in her glowing soul she ran quickly to tell the mourning friends of Jesus, that they might be comforted with the same comfort whereby she herself had been consoled.

Lieutenant Kenneth MacLeish, soldier of his country and of the Cross, left Yale College for the firing-lines of the World War. Shortly before his lifeless body was found on a farm in Belgium, he wrote to his

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parents in Chicago: "I have no fears. I have no regrets. I have only to thank God for such a wonderful opportunity to serve him and the world. If I must make the supreme sacrifice, I will do it gladly and I will do it honorably and bravely, as your son should, and the life that I lay down will be my preparation for the grander, finer life that I shall take up. *I shall live.* You must not grieve. I shall be supremely happy—so must you—not that I have 'gone west,' but that I have bought such a wonderful life at so small a price and paid for it gladly." He had believed Christ's promise, "Because I live, ye shall live also." In that faith he triumphed, and in that same faith his father and mother find consolation.

The Easter note is *a note of assurance in a world of doubt*. Thorwaldsen's statue of Thomas represents him standing with a rule in his hand for measuring all evidence and argument. His earnestness inclined him to melancholy. His questioning mind made him a doubter. If there was a difficulty, he was sure to find it. If there was a black patch in the sky, he was certain to see it. He was the rationalist among the apostles.

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When told of his Lord's resurrection, he did not say, "If I see, I will believe"; but "unless I see, I will not believe." The very form in which he expressed himself indicates that he did not expect relief. For seven days he was shut up in Doubting Castle. Repeatedly his brethren made vain attempts to rid him of his unbelief. Their reports all seemed to him like idle tales. If they had seen the Master, *he* must see the Master. No second-hand evidence would satisfy him. Nay, lest his own eyes might deceive him, he must not only see the Christ, but put his finger into the nail-print and his hand into the wounded side. This opportunity Jesus gave him: "Reach hither thy finger, and see my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and put it into my side; and become not faithless, but believing." It was more evidence than he needed. With one leap he sprang out of darkness into light, exclaiming, "My Lord, and my God!" Doubt was gone. Fresh life was poured into his soul, and he went forth to preach him who was dead, but was now assuredly alive forevermore.

Physical science has made this an age of

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doubt. Poor Burbank, who told us that he loved everybody and then immediately proceeded to call men "narrow bigots and petrified hypocrites," spoke of "our savior science" and of influence as the only immortality. When I asked a high-school lad for his judgment of the horticulturist's recent deliverance, he replied: "In the realm of religion I should no more trust Luther Burbank than Babe Ruth. The latter knows baseball; the former knows horticulture; but neither has experimented extensively in the laboratory of Christian experience." According to Carl Vogt, there is absolutely nothing in man which cannot be accounted for chemically. Death dissolves him, and he returns to the dust. To such an extreme did one of my professors carry the rationalizing process that he came to doubt his own existence. He was reduced to the absurdity of thinking that there could be a doubt without a doubter.

It is not unscientific to believe. As to a life after death, physical science can have nothing to say. From that angle, the affirmative is unproved, the negative is unprovable. But Christianity has its own

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facts, makes its own appeal (as Doctor Mullins rightly affirms), brings its own credentials, has its own valid and legitimate criteria of truth, its own methods of verification, its own constructive principles, its own way of apprehending reality. It is manifestly unscientific for the physical scientist to insist on bringing his alien principle of causality over into the realm of Christianity where only personality will explain the facts. Tyndall confessed that the nexus between consciousness and the brain is unthinkable. Materialists therefore are without justification when they assume that the connection is causal, and that when the brain ceases to function consciousness ceases to be. Were it not for the certainty that the strong Son of God burst the bars of death, some of us might be driven into unwilling agnosticism. But with the assurance that of all vital facts which need indisputable proof none are better proved than the historical and experiential fact of our Lord's resurrection, we unite with Paul in his triumphant Easter hymn: "Now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of them that are asleep."

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The Easter note is *a note of life in a world of death*. There was a garden at the place where Jesus had been crucified, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had yet been buried. Therefore because it was the day of Preparation for the Pass-over, and the tomb was close at hand, they put Jesus there. What a strange mingling of opposites! A tomb in a garden! A reminder of decay in the midst of growth, of death in the midst of life! However beautiful and fragrant our garden, it has its grave. To this complexion must we come at last. All this Jesus changed. He perfumed the sepulcher with the myrrh and spices of his burial. Into its darkness he flung light from the eternal years. He harmonized it with the surrounding bloom and fragrance. Nay, more. While the grass withered and the flower faded, he as the Prince of Life, by manifesting there the power of his endless life, made that rock-tomb a monument to life's lordship over sin and sorrow, decay and death.

Doctor Truett tells of a cultured young woman, whose spiritual nature was darkened by the direst skepticism. One day she

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said to the preacher, "Intellectually, I just cannot accept your preaching that Christ rose from the dead as your Scriptures allege." He suggested that for a moment she waive the question of the resurrection; then asked, "What do you think of *him*?" She replied: "I cannot find any fault with him. Everything about his words and works and character appeals to me." The minister then led her another step: "If he is the Son of God with power, do you wish to know it?" "Assuredly I do," she answered. "Then," said he, "you go alone and tell him that you are vexed by doubt, but that you wish light, and that you are willing to yield yourself to him, who has already won your admiring appreciation. Try him in this experiential way." Next day she came with a radiant face, saying, "I cannot prove by outside proof that Jesus rose from the dead, but my heart knows of a surety that he is alive, for he has given life to me."

To us who were dead through trespasses and sins, which were once habitual while we walked in the ways of this world, has God imparted life. Being rich in mercy,

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because of the great love which he bestowed on us, he has caused us, dead though we were through our offenses, to live with Christ—has raised us from spiritual death, and in his eternal purpose has enthroned us with him in the heavenly realms, in order that, by his goodness to us in Christ Jesus, he may display in the ages to come the transcendent riches of his grace.

Finally, the Easter note is *a note of victory in a world of defeat*. In the night of Christ's betrayal and arrest, his disciples all forsook him and fled. They failed at the crisis. They were defeated through fear, and that defeat revealed their essential character. The demand for the heroic often comes suddenly, but

the power to meet it comes of all a man's yesterdays. It is a growth. Heroism is always spontaneous; but the spontaneous things in life have the longest history. The words that leap to the lip of their own accord, the deeds done without a minute's premeditation, are the outcome of the real self a man has been fashioning all his life. The thing that responds to the spur of the moment is the habit of years. There is nothing so historical in a man's life as his impromptus. The crises of life are decided in apparently uncritical hours.

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In every experience for the past three years these disciples had been deciding how they would bear themselves in their supreme test. They ignominiously failed, and the failure seemed to be final. But within three days there was an utter change. They were not the same men. Their sorrow was turned into joy, their fear into boldness, their weakness into strength, their defeat into victory. There is only one rational explanation of this change—they had seen the risen Christ and he had breathed on them the power of the Holy Spirit.

Dr. A. J. Gordon, whose praise had long been in all the churches, was grappling with the grim monarch of the shadows. Fever and sleeplessness were fast wearing down his vitality. His physical weakness produced feelings of isolation, even desertion. In his prolonged insomnia he confessed with strong crying and tears his unworthiness, pleaded for a sense of Christ's companionship, promised renewed consecration and greater diligence, in language that reminded his family of Gethsemane's agonizing prayer. Toward evening of the last day, his physician, coming in cheerfully, said,

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“Doctor Gordon, have you a good word for us tonight?” With a clear full voice he answered, “Victory!” At midnight he fell asleep, and the mourners went about the streets. After a life of victorious service, he seemed to suffer temporary defeat. But in the great word “Victory” he let us know that he had trodden death under foot, and shaken the clay of the sepulcher from his feet.

We are not strangers to life’s threnodies. We are acquainted with the misery of impotence. We know what it is to have our days shot through with the weary monotone of failure. In the direction of Easter lies the road to triumph. Paul, declaring himself strong for all things in Christ who empowered him, closes his unanswerable argument for the resurrection with the outburst of joyful confidence:

Where, O death, is thy victory? Where, O death, is thy sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but to God be thanks, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ! Therefore, beloved, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the Lord’s work, knowing that your toil is not fruitless in the Lord.

Nickens, 1 the mounds 14
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Breaking the old record.

